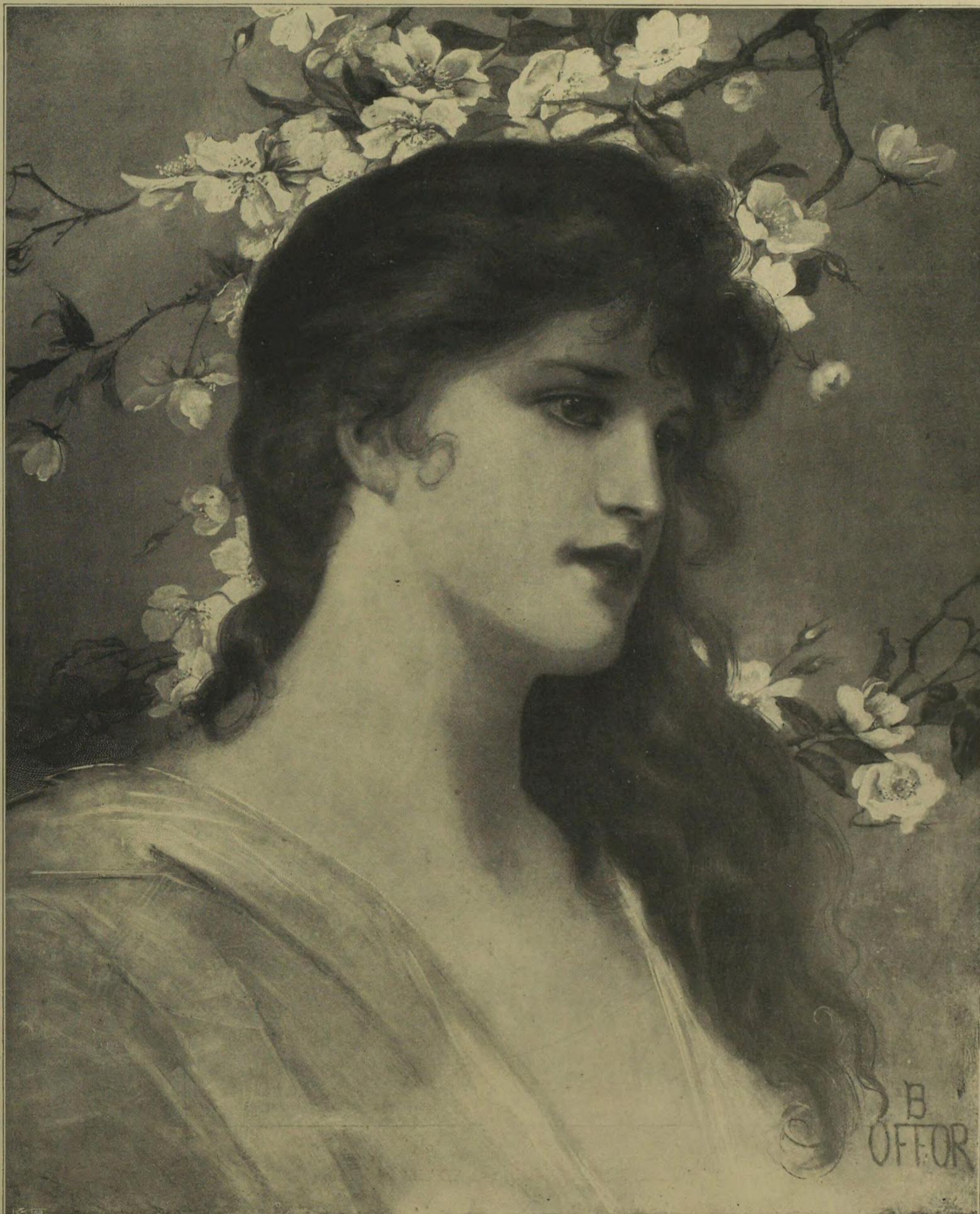
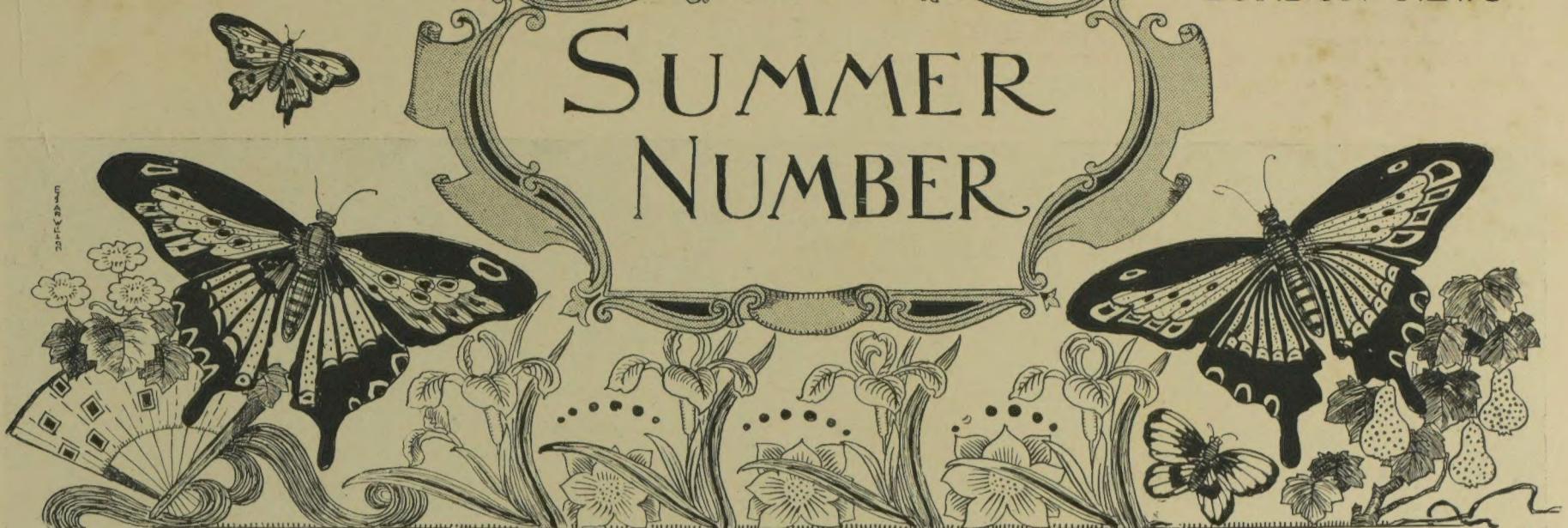


THE ILLUSTRATED

LONDON NEWS

SUMMER NUMBER



SUMMER ROSES.

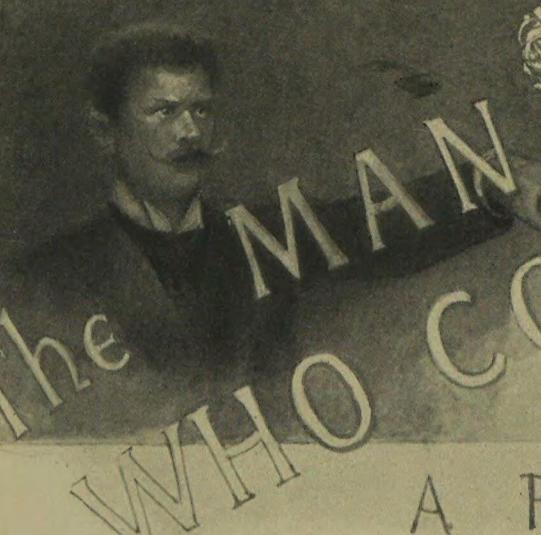


RIVAL ATTRACTIONS: PEDAL OR PADDLE?

To Fly, or shall it be to Float?
To spin on wheels astraddle?
Such is the fight 'twixt Bike and Boat:
'Tis Pedal versus Paddle.

Time was when no man dared dispute
The glories of the River.
But now those nimble wheels confute,
With many a shining shiver.

Yet may you haply compromise,
And wheel to join your skipper,
Then float away 'neath sunny skies
With bike aboard the clipper.



The MAN WHO COULD WORK MIRACLES

A PANTOUM IN PROSE

BY H. G. WELLS.

ILLUSTRATED BY A. FORESTIER.

IT is doubtful whether the gift was innate. For my own part, I think it came to him suddenly. Indeed, until he was thirty he was a sceptic, and did not believe in miraculous powers. And here, since it is the most convenient place, I must mention that he was a little man, and had eyes of a hot brown, very erect red hair, a moustache like the German Emperor's, and freckles. His name was George McWhirter Fotheringay—not the sort of name by any means to lead to any expectation of miracles—and he was clerk at Gomshott's. He was greatly addicted to assertive argument: It was while he was asserting the impossibility of miracles that he had his first intimation of his extraordinary powers. This particular argument was being held in the bar of the Long Dragon, and Toddy Beamish was conducting the opposition by a monotonous but effective "So you say," that drove Mr. Fotheringay to the very limit of his patience.

There were present, besides these two, a very dusty cyclist, landlord Cox, and Miss Maybridge, the perfectly respectable and rather portly barmaid of the Dragon. Miss Maybridge was standing with her back to Mr. Fotheringay, washing glasses; the others were watching him, more or less amused by the present ineffectiveness of the assertive method. Goaded by the Torres Vedras tactics of Mr. Beamish, Mr. Fotheringay determined to make an unusual rhetorical effort. "Looky here, Mr. Beamish," said Mr. Fotheringay. "Let us clearly understand what a miracle is. It's something contrariwise to the course of nature done by power of Will, something what couldn't happen without being specially willed."

"So you say," said Mr. Beamish, repulsing him.

Mr. Fotheringay appealed to the cyclist, who had hitherto been a silent auditor, and received his assent—given with a hesitating cough and a glance at Mr. Beamish. The landlord would express no opinion, and Mr. Fotheringay, returning to Mr. Beamish, received the unexpected concession of a qualified assent to his definition of a miracle.

"For instance," said Mr. Fotheringay, greatly encouraged. "Here would be a miracle. That lamp, in the natural course of nature, couldn't burn like that upsy-down, could it, Beamish?"

"You say it couldn't," said Beamish.

"And you?" said Fotheringay. "You don't mean to say—eh?"

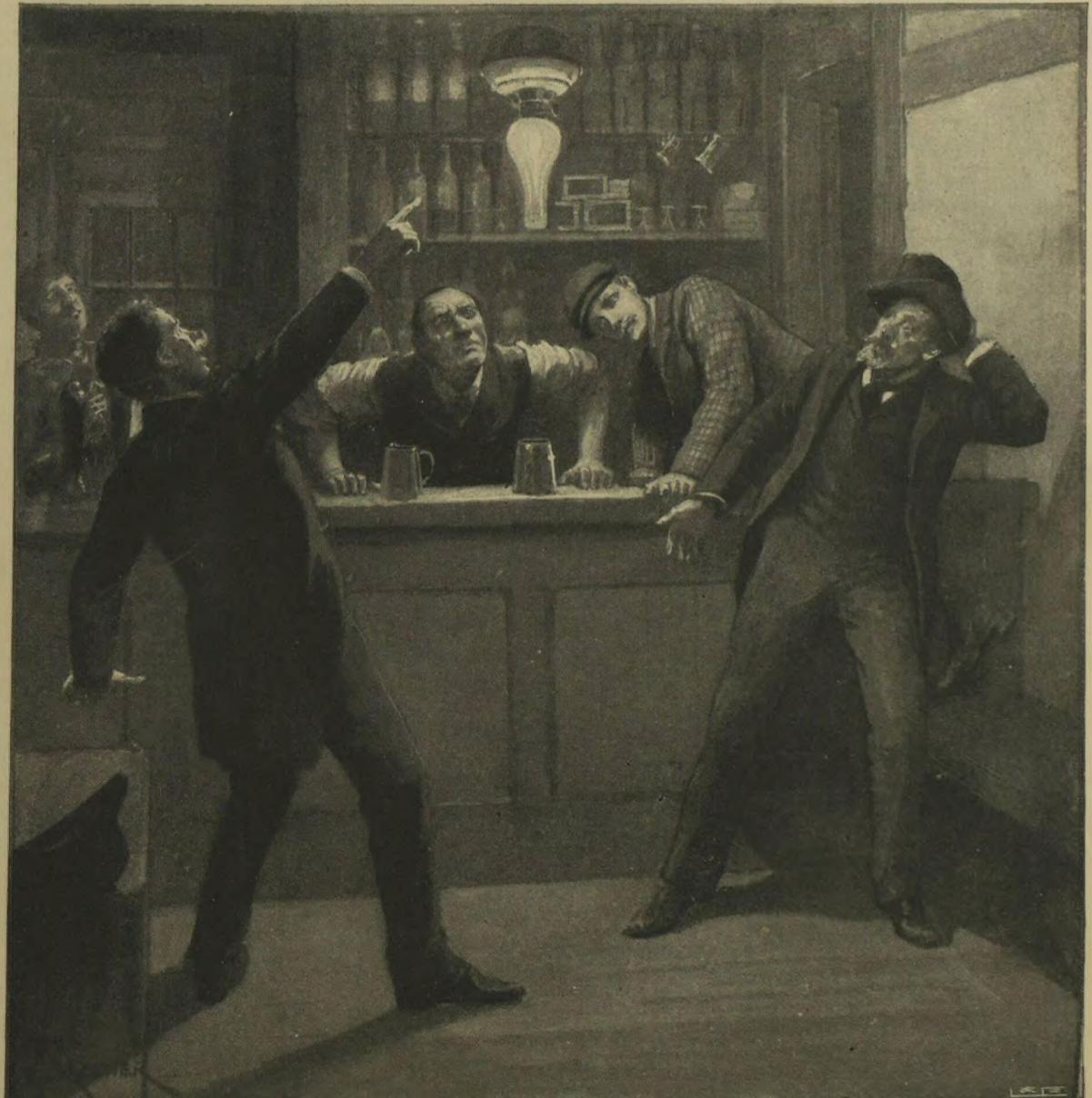
"No," said Beamish reluctantly. "No, it couldn't."

"Very well," said Mr. Fotheringay. "Then here comes someone, as it might be me, along here, and stands as it might be here, and says to that lamp, as I might do, collecting all my will—Turn upsy-down without breaking, and go on burning steady, and—Hullo!"

It was enough to make anyone say "Hullo!" The impossible, the incredible, was visible to them all. The lamp hung inverted in the air, burning quietly with its flame pointing down. It was as solid, as indisputable as ever a lamp was, the prosaic common lamp of the Long Dragon bar,

Mr. Fotheringay stood with an extended forefinger and the knitted brows of one anticipating a catastrophic smash. The cyclist, who was sitting next the lamp, ducked and jumped across the bar. Everybody jumped, more or less. Miss Maybridge turned and screamed. For nearly three seconds the lamp remained still. A faint cry of mental distress came from Mr. Fotheringay. "I can't keep it up," he said, "any longer." He staggered back, and the inverted lamp suddenly flared, fell against the corner of the bar, bounced aside, smashed upon the floor, and went out.

It was lucky it had a metal receiver, or the whole place would have been in a blaze. Mr. Cox was the first to speak, and his remark, shorn of needless excrescences, was to the effect that Fotheringay was a fool. Fotheringay was beyond disputing even so fundamental a proposition as that! He was astonished beyond measure at the thing that had occurred. The subsequent conversation threw absolutely no light on the matter so far as Fotheringay was concerned; the



The lamp hung inverted in the air, burning quietly with its flame pointing down.

general opinion not only followed Mr. Cox very closely but very vehemently. Everyone accused Fotheringay of a silly trick, and presented him to himself as a foolish destroyer of comfort and security. His mind was in a tornado of perplexity, he was himself inclined to agree with them, and he made a remarkably ineffectual opposition to the proposal of his departure.

He went home flushed and heated, coat-collar crumpled, eyes smarting and ears red. He watched each of the ten street lamps nervously as he passed it. It was only when he found himself alone in his little bed-room in Church Row that he was able to grapple seriously with his memories of the occurrence, and ask, "What on earth happened?"

He had removed his coat and boots, and was sitting on the bed with his hands in his pockets repeating the text of his defence for the seventeenth time, "I didn't want the confounded thing to upset," when it occurred to him that at the precise moment he had said the commanding words he had inadvertently willed the thing he said, and that when he had seen the lamp in the air he had felt that it depended on him to maintain it there without being clear how this was to be done. He had not a particularly complex mind, or he might have stuck for a time at that "inadvertently willed," embracing, as it does, the abstrusest problems of voluntary action; but as it was, the idea came to him with a quite acceptable haziness. And from that, following, as I must admit, no clear logical path, he came to the test of experiment.

He pointed resolutely to his candle and collected his mind, though he felt he did a foolish thing. "Be raised up," he said. But in a second that feeling vanished. The candle was raised, hung in the air one giddy moment, and as Mr. Fotheringay gasped, fell with a smash on his toilet-table, leaving him in darkness save for the expiring glow of its wick.

For a time Mr. Fotheringay sat in the darkness, perfectly still. "It did happen, after all," he said. "And 'ow I'm to explain it I don't know." He sighed heavily, and began feeling in his pockets for a match. He could find none, and he rose and groped about the toilet-table. "I wish I had a match," he said. He resorted to his coat, and there was none there, and then it dawned

willed it lit. He did, and perceived it burning in the midst of his toilet-table mat. He caught it up hastily, and it went out. His perception of possibilities enlarged, and he felt for and replaced the candle in its candlestick. "Here! you be lit," said Mr. Fotheringay, and forthwith the candle was flaring, and he saw a little black hole in the toilet-cover, with a wisp of smoke rising from it. For a time he stared from this to the little flame and back, and then looked up and met his own gaze in the looking glass. By this help he communed with himself in silence for a time.

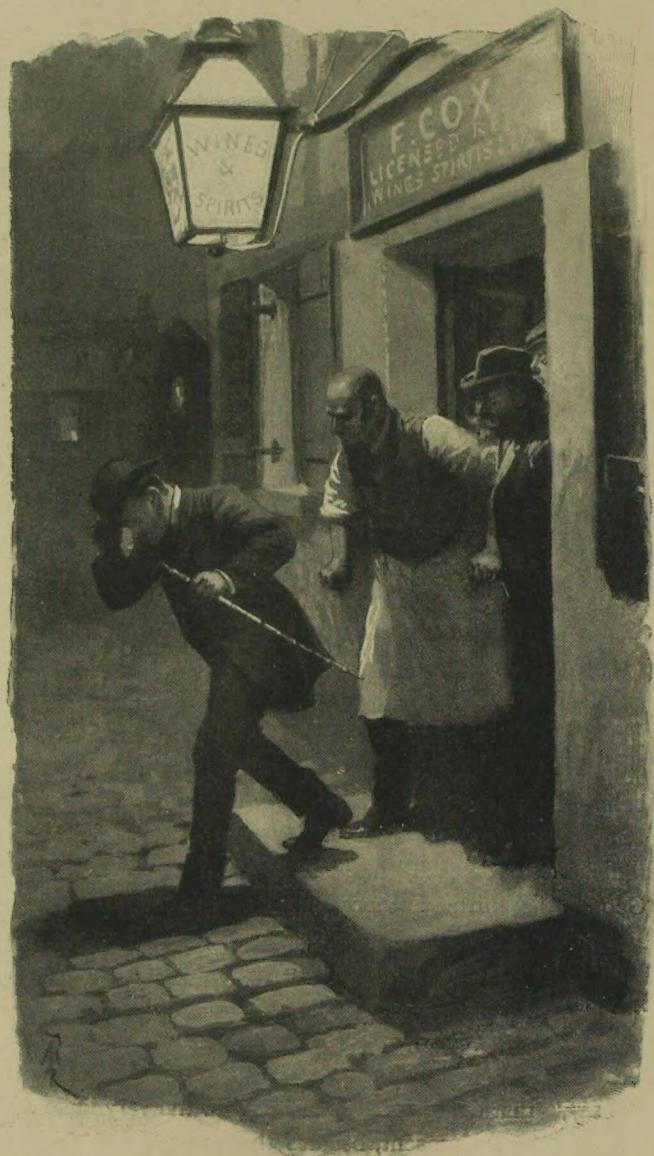
"How about miracles now?" said Mr. Fotheringay at last, addressing his reflection.

The subsequent meditations of Mr. Fotheringay were of a severe but confused description. So far, he could see it was a case of pure willing with him. The nature of his experiences so far disinclined him for any further experiments, at least until he had reconsidered

them. But he lifted a sheet of paper, and turned a glass of water pink and then green, and he created a snail, which he miraculously annihilated, and got himself a miraculous new toothbrush. Somewhen in the small hours he had reached the fact that his will-power must be of a particularly rare and pungent quality, a fact of which he had certainly had inklings before, but no certain assurance. The scare and perplexity of his first discovery was now qualified by pride in this evidence of singularity and by vague intimations of advantage. He became aware that the church clock was striking one, and as it did not occur to him that his daily duties at Gomshott's might be miraculously dispensed with, he resumed undressing, in order to get to bed without further delay. As he struggled to get his shirt over his head, he was struck with a brilliant idea. "Let me be in bed," he said, and found himself so. "Undressed," he stipulated; and, finding the sheets cold, added hastily, "and in my nightshirt—no, in a nice soft woollen nightshirt. Ah!" he said with immense enjoyment. "And now let me be comfortably asleep." . . .

He awoke at his usual hour and was pensive all through breakfast-time, wondering whether his overnight experience might not be a particularly vivid dream. At length his mind turned again to cautious experiments. For instance, he had three eggs for breakfast; two his landlady had supplied, good, but shoppy, and one was a delicious fresh goose-egg, laid, cooked, and served by his extraordinary will. He hurried off to Gomshott's in a state of profound but carefully concealed excitement, and only remembered the shell of the third egg when his landlady spoke of it that night. All day he could do no work because of this astonishingly new self-knowledge, but this caused him no inconvenience, because he made up for it miraculously in his last ten minutes.

As the day wore on his state of mind passed from wonder to elation, albeit the circumstances of his dismissal from the Long Dragon were still disagreeable to recall, and a garbled account of the matter that had reached his colleagues led to some badinage. It was evident he must be careful how he lifted frangible articles, but in other ways his gift promised more and more as he turned it over in his mind. He intended among other things to increase his personal property by unostentatious acts of creation. He called into existence a pair of very splendid diamond studs, and hastily annihilated them again as young Gomshott came across the counting-house to his desk. He was afraid young Gomshott might wonder how he had come by them. He saw quite clearly the gift required caution and watchfulness in its exercise, but so far as he could judge the difficulties attending its mastery would be no greater than those he had already faced in the study of cycling. It was that



He made a remarkably ineffectual opposition to the proposal of his departure.



By means of a match he saw for himself that this beautiful miracle was indeed accomplished.

upon him that miracles were possible even with matches. He extended a hand and scowled at it in the dark. "Let there be a match in that hand," he said. He felt some light object fall across his palm, and his fingers closed upon a match.

After several ineffectual attempts to light this, he discovered it was a safety-match. He threw it down, and then it occurred to him that he might have



"Go to Hades! Go, now!"

confused. The stick receded at a considerable velocity, and incontinently came a cry of anger and a bad word from the approaching person. "Who are you throwing brambles at, you fool?" cried a voice. "That got me on the shin."

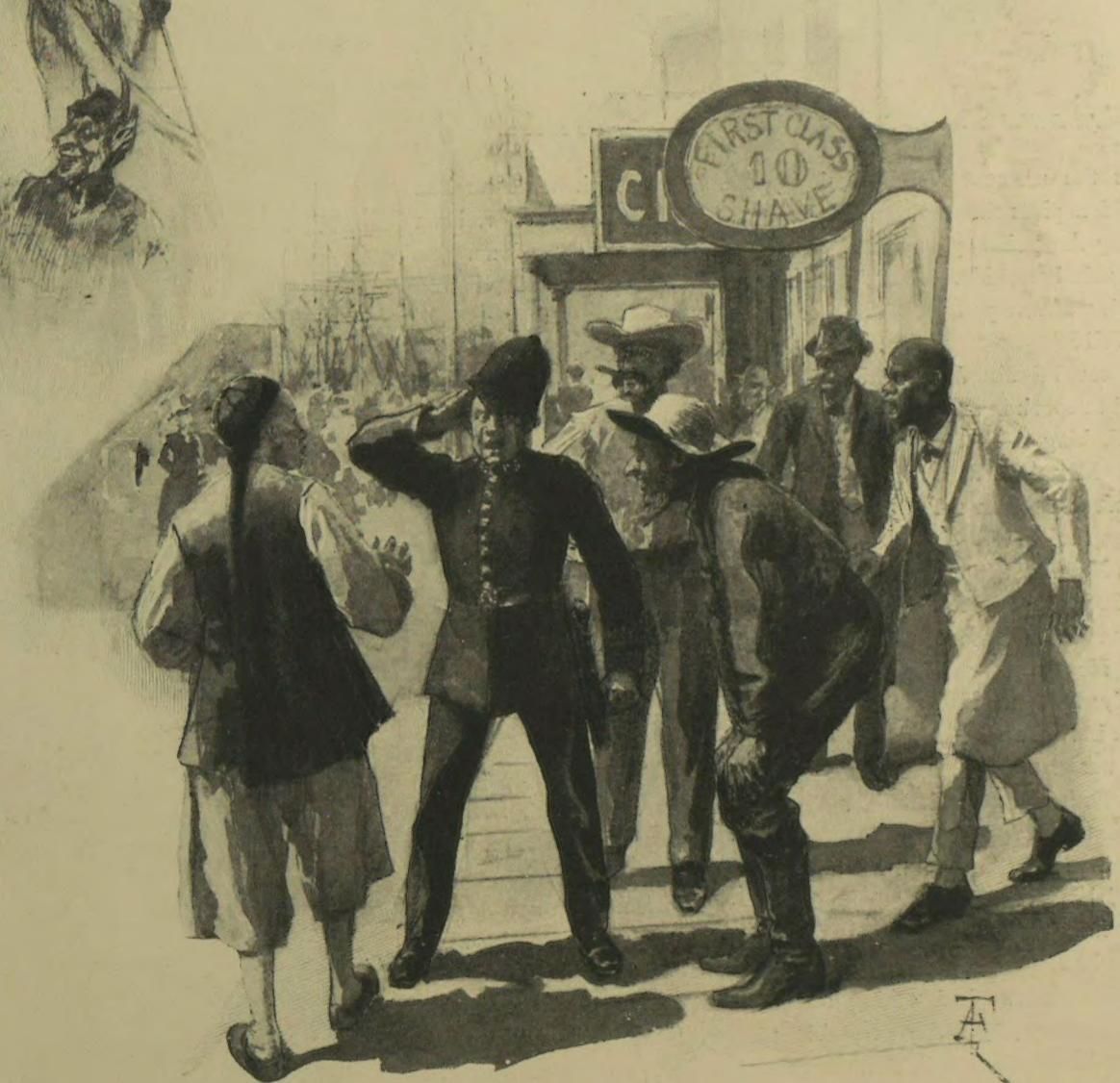
"I'm sorry, old chap," said Mr. Fotheringay, and then realising the awkward nature of the explanation, caught nervously at his moustache. He saw Winch, one of the three Immering constables, advancing.

"What d'yer mean by it?" asked the constable. "Hullo! It's you, is it? The gent that broke the lamp at the Long Dragon!"



analogy, perhaps, quite as much as the feeling that he would be unwelcome in the Long Dragon, that drove him out after supper into the lane beyond the gas-works, to rehearse a few miracles in private.

There was possibly a certain want of originality in his attempts, for apart from his will-power Mr. Fotheringay was not a very exceptional man. The miracle of Moses' rod came to his mind, but the night was dark and unfavourable to the proper control of large miraculous snakes. Then he recollect ed the story of "Tannhäuser" that he had read on the back of the Philharmonic programme. That seemed to him singularly attractive and harmless. He stuck his walking-stick—a very nice Poona-Penang lawyer—into the turf that edged the footpath, and commanded the dry wood to blossom. The air was immediately full of the scent of roses, and by means of a match he saw for himself that this beautiful miracle was indeed accomplished. His satisfaction was ended by advancing footsteps. Afraid of a premature discovery of his powers, he addressed the blossoming stick hastily: "Go back." What he meant was "Change back"; but of course he was



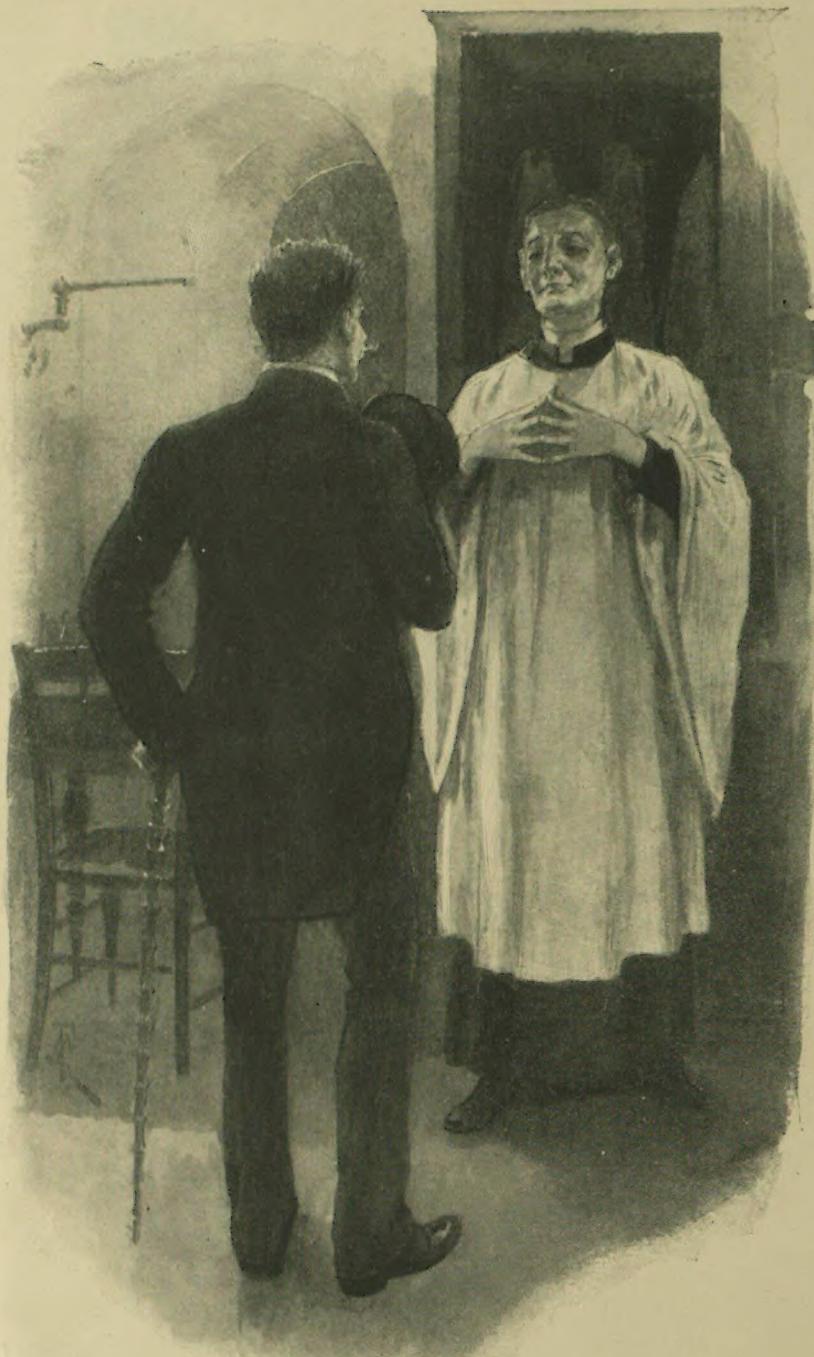
Struck by a happy thought, he transferred the constable to San Francisco.

"I don't mean anything by it," said Mr. Fotheringay. "Nothing at all."

"What d'yer do it for then?"

"Oh, bother!" said Mr. Fotheringay.

"Bother indeed! D'yer know that stick hurt? What d'yer do it for, eh?"



He decided to consult Mr. Maydig immediately after the service.

For the moment Mr. Fotheringay could not think what he had done it for. His silence seemed to irritate Mr. Winch. "You've been assaulting the police, young man, this time. That's what you done."

"Look here, Mr. Winch," said Mr. Fotheringay, annoyed and confused, "I'm very sorry. The fact is—"

"Well?"

He could think of no way but the truth. "I was working a miracle." He tried to speak in an off-hand way, but try as he would he couldn't.

"Working a——! 'Ere, don't you talk rot. Working a miracle, indeed! Miracle! Well, that's downright funny! Why, you's the chap that don't believe in miracles. . . . Fact is, this is another of yur silly conjuring tricks—that's what this is. Now, I tell you——"

But Mr. Fotheringay never heard what Mr. Winch was going to tell him. He realised he had given himself away, flung his valuable secret to all the winds of heaven. A violent gust of irritation swept him to action. He turned on the constable swiftly and fiercely. "Here," he said, "I've had enough of this, I have! I'll show you a silly conjuring trick, I will! Go to Hades! Go, now!"

He was alone!

Mr. Fotheringay performed no more miracles that night, nor did he trouble to see what had become of his flowering stick. He returned to the town forthwith, scared and very quiet, and went to his bed-room. "Lord!" he said, "it's a powerful gift—an extremely powerful gift. I didn't hardly mean as much as that. Not really. . . . I wonder what Hades is like!"

He sat on the bed taking off his boots. Struck by a happy thought he transferred the constable to San Francisco, and without any more interference with normal causation went soberly to bed. In the night he dreamt of the anger of Winch.

The next day Mr. Fotheringay heard two interesting items of news. Someone had planted a most beautiful climbing rose against the elder Mr. Gomshot's private house in the Lullaborough Road, and the river as far as Rawling's Mill was to be dragged for Constable Winch.

Mr. Fotheringay was abstracted and thoughtful all that day, and performed no miracles either on that day or the next, except certain provisions for Winch, and the miracle of completing his day's work with punctual perfection in spite of all the bee-swarm of thoughts that

hummed through his mind. And the extraordinary abstraction and meekness of his manner was remarked by several people, and made a matter for jesting. For the most part he was thinking of Winch.

On Sunday evening he went to chapel, and oddly enough, Mr. Maydig, who took a certain interest in occult matters, preached about "things that are not lawful." Mr. Fotheringay was not a regular chapel-goer, but the system of assertive scepticism, to which I have already alluded, was now very much shaken. The tenor of the sermon threw an entirely new light on these novel gifts, and he suddenly decided to consult Mr. Maydig immediately after the service. So soon as that was determined, he found himself wondering why he had not done so before.

Mr. Maydig, a lean, excitable man with quite remarkably long wrists and neck, was gratified at a request for a private conversation from a young man whose carelessness in religious matters was a subject for general remark in the town. After a few necessary delays, he conducted him to the study of the Manse, which was contiguous to the chapel, seated him comfortably, and, standing in front of a cheerful fire—his legs threw a Rhodian arch of shadow on the opposite wall—requested Mr. Fotheringay to state his business.

At first, Mr. Fotheringay was a little abashed, and found some difficulty in opening the matter. "You will scarcely believe me, Mr. Maydig, I am afraid"—and so forth for some time. He tried a question at last, and asked Mr. Maydig his opinion of miracles.

Mr. Maydig was still saying "Well" in an extremely judicial tone, when Mr. Fotheringay interrupted again: "You don't believe, I suppose, that some common sort of person—like myself, for instance—as it might be sitting here now, might have some sort of twist inside him that made him able to do things by his will."

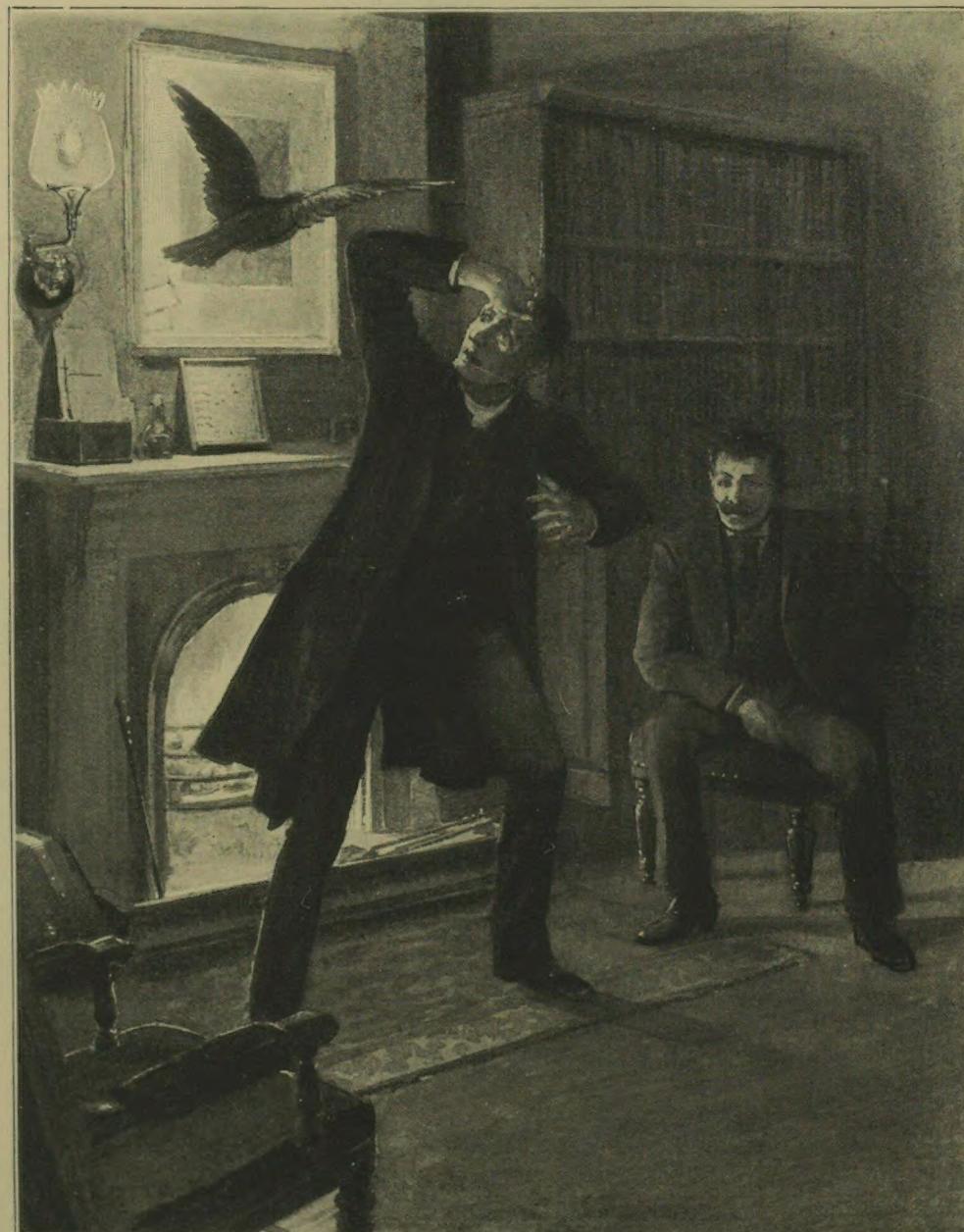
"It's possible," said Mr. Maydig. "Something of the sort, perhaps, is possible."

"If I might make free with something here, I think I might show you by a sort of experiment," said Mr. Fotheringay. "Now, take that tobacco-jar on the table, for instance. What I want to know is whether what I am going to do with it is a miracle or not. Just half a minute, Mr. Maydig, please."

He knitted his brows, pointed to the tobacco-jar and said: "Be a bowl of violets."

The tobacco-jar did as it was ordered.

Mr. Maydig started violently at the change, and stood looking from the thaumaturgist to the bowl of flowers. He said nothing. Presently he ventured



A blue pigeon was fluttering round the room and making Mr. Maydig duck every time it came near him.

to lean over the table and smell the violets; they were fresh-picked and very fine ones. Then he stared at Mr. Fotheringay again.

"How did you do that?" he asked.

Mr. Fotheringay pulled his moustache. "Just told it—and there you are. Is that a miracle, or is it black art, or what is it? And what do you think's the matter with me? That's what I want to ask."

"It's a most extraordinary occurrence."

"And this day last week I knew no more that I could do things like that than you did. It came quite sudden. It's something odd about my will, I suppose, and that's as far as I can see."

"Is that—the only thing. Could you do other things besides that?"

"Lord, yes!" said Mr. Fotheringay. "Just anything." He thought, and suddenly recalled a conjuring entertainment he had seen. "Here!" He pointed. "Change into a bowl of fish—no, not that—change into a glass bowl full of water with goldfish swimming in it. That's better! You see that, Mr. Maydig?"

"It's astonishing. It's incredible. You are either a most extraordinary . . . But no—"

"I could change it into anything," said Mr. Fotheringay. "Just anything. Here! be a pigeon, will you?"

In another moment a blue pigeon was fluttering round the room and making Mr. Maydig duck every time it came near him. "Stop there, will you," said Mr. Fotheringay; and the pigeon hung motionless in the air. "I could change it back to a bowl of flowers," he said, and after replacing the pigeon on the table worked that miracle. "I expect you will want your pipe presently," he said, and restored the tobacco-jar.

Mr. Maydig had followed all these later changes in a sort of ejaculatory silence. He stared at Mr. Fotheringay fearfully, and, in a very gingerly manner, picked up the tobacco-jar, examined it, replaced it on the table. "Well!" was the only expression of his feelings.

"Now, after that it's easier to explain what I came about," said Mr. Fotheringay; and proceeded to a lengthy and involved narrative of his strange experiences, beginning with the affair of the lamp in the Long Dragon and complicated by persistent allusions to Winch. As he went on, the transient pride Mr. Maydig's consternation had caused passed away; he became the very ordinary Mr. Fotheringay of everyday intercourse again. Mr. Maydig listened intently, the tobacco-jar in his hand, and his bearing changed also with the course of the

the arguments of that great thinker"—Mr. Maydig's voice sank—"his Grace the Duke of Argyll. Here we plumb some profounder law—deeper than the ordinary laws of nature. Yes—yes. Go on. Go on!"

Mr. Fotheringay proceeded to tell of his misadventure with Winch, and Mr. Maydig, no longer overawed or scared, began to jerk his limbs about and interject astonishment. "It's this what troubled me most," proceeded Mr. Fotheringay; "it's this I'm most mijitly in want of advice for; of course he's at San Francisco—wherever San Francisco may be—but of course it's awkward for both of us, as you'll see, Mr. Maydig. I don't see how he can understand what has happened, and I daresay he's scared and exasperated something tremendous, and trying to get at me. I daresay he keeps on starting off to come here. I send him back, by a miracle, every few hours, when I think of it. And, of course, that's a thing he won't be able to understand, and it's bound to annoy him; and, of course, if he takes a ticket every time it will cost him a lot of money. I done the best I could for him, but of course it's difficult for him to put himself in my place. I thought afterwards that his clothes might have got scorched, you know—if Hades is all it's supposed to be—before I shifted him. In that case I suppose they'd have locked him up in San Francisco. Of course I willed him a new suit of clothes on him directly I thought of it. But, you see, I'm already in a deuce of a tangle—"

Mr. Maydig looked serious. "I see you are in a tangle. Yes, it's a difficult position. How you are to end it . . ." He became diffuse and inconclusive.

"However, we'll leave Winch for a little and discuss the larger question. I don't think

this is a case of the black art or anything of the sort. I don't think there is any taint of criminality about it at all, Mr. Fotheringay—none whatever, unless you are suppressing material facts. No, it's miracles—pure miracles—miracles, if I may say so, of the very highest class."

He began to pace the hearthrug and gesticulate, while Mr. Fotheringay sat with his arm on the table and his head on his arm, looking worried. "I don't see how I'm to manage about Winch," he said.

"A gift of working miracles—apparently a very powerful gift," said Mr. Maydig, "will find a way about Winch—never fear. My dear Sir, you are a most important man—a man of the most astonishing possibilities. As

evidence, for example! And in other ways, the things you may do . . ."

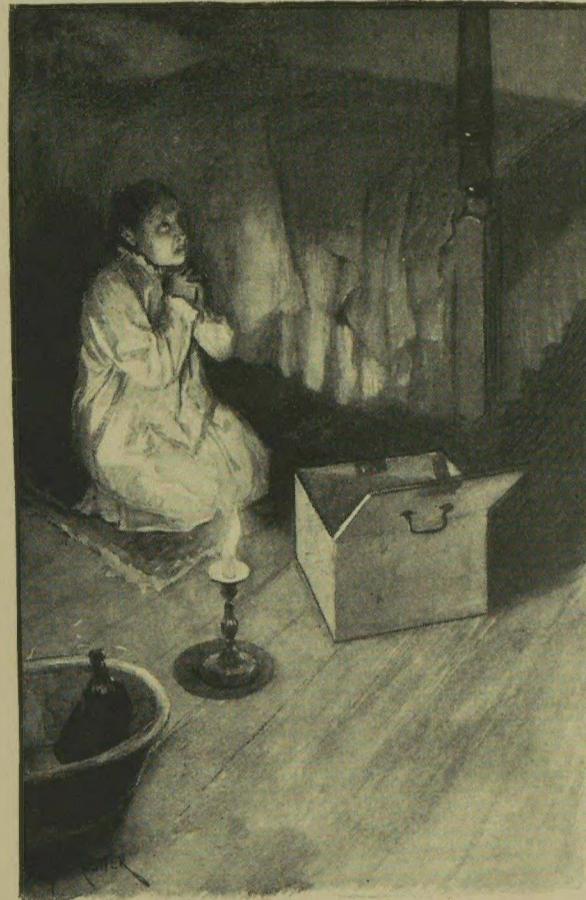
"Yes, I've thought of a thing or two," said Mr. Fotheringay. "But—some of the things came a bit twisty. You saw that fish at first? Wrong sort of bowl and wrong sort of fish. And I thought I'd ask someone."

"A proper course," said Mr. Maydig, "a very proper course—altogether the proper course."

He stopped and looked at Mr. Fotheringay. "It's practically an unlimited gift. Let us test your powers,

for instance. If they really are . . . If they really are all they seem to be."

And so, incredible as it may seem, in the study of the little house behind the Congregational Chapel, on the evening of Sunday, Nov. 10, 1896, Mr. Fotheringay, egged on and inspired by Mr. Maydig, began to work miracles. The reader's attention is specially and definitely called to the date. He will object, probably has already objected, that certain points in this story are improbable, that if any things of the sort already described had indeed occurred, they would have been in all the papers a year ago. The details immediately following he will find



She had got up out of her sleep to smash a private bottle of brandy in her box.



Mr. Fotheringay, at Mr. Maydig's order, revised the supper very thoroughly.

narrative. Presently, while Mr. Fotheringay was dealing with the miracle of the third egg, the minister interrupted with a fluttering extended hand—

"It is possible," he said. "It is credible. It is amazing, of course, but it reconciles a number of amazing difficulties. The power to work miracles is a gift—a peculiar quality like genius or second sight—hitherto it has come very rarely and to exceptional people. But in this case . . . I have always wondered at the miracles of Mahomet, and at Yogi's miracles, and the miracles of Madame Blavatsky. But, of course! Yes, it is simply a gift! It carries out so beautifully

particularly hard to accept, because among other things they involve the conclusion that he or she, the reader in question, must have been killed in a violent and unprecedented manner more than a year ago. Now a miracle is nothing if not improbable, and as a matter of fact the reader was killed in a violent and unprecedented manner a year ago. In the subsequent course of this story that will become perfectly clear and credible, as every right-minded and reasonable reader will admit. But this is not the place for the end of the story, being but little beyond the hither side of the middle. And at first the miracles worked by Mr. Fotheringay were timid little miracles—little things with the cups and parlour fitments, as feeble as the miracles of Theosophists, and, feeble as they were, they were received with awe by his collaborator. He would have preferred to settle the Winch business out of hand, but Mr. Maydig would not let him. But after they had worked a dozen of these domestic trivialities, their sense of power grew, their imagination began to show signs of stimulation, and their ambition enlarged. Their first larger enterprise was due to hunger and the negligence of Mrs. Minchin, Mr. Maydig's housekeeper. The meal to which the minister conducted Mr. Fotheringay was certainly ill-laid and uninviting as refreshment for two industrious miracle-workers; but they were already seated, and Mr. Maydig was descanting in sorrow rather than in anger upon his housekeeper's shortcomings, before it occurred to Mr. Fotheringay that an opportunity lay before him. "Don't you think, Mr. Maydig," he said, "if it isn't a liberty, I—"

"My dear Mr. Fotheringay! Of course! No—I didn't think."

Mr. Fotheringay waved his hand. "What shall we have?" he said, in a large, inclusive spirit, and, at Mr. Maydig's order, revised the supper very thoroughly. "As for me," he said, eyeing Mr. Maydig's selection, "I'm always particularly fond of a tankard of stout and a nice Welsh rabbit, and I'll order that. I ain't much given to Burgundy," and forthwith stout and Welsh rabbit promptly appeared at his command. They sat long at their supper, talking like equals, as Mr. Fotheringay presently perceived, with a glow of surprise and gratification, of all the miracles they would presently do. "And, by the bye, Mr. Maydig," said Mr. Fotheringay, "I might perhaps be able to help you—in the domestic way."

"Don't quite follow," said Mr. Maydig, pouring out a glass of miraculous old Burgundy.

Mr. Fotheringay helped himself to a second Welsh rabbit out of vacancy, and took a mouthful. "I was thinking," he said, "I might be able (*chum, chum*) to work (*chum, chum*) a miracle with Mrs. Minchin (*chum, chum*)—make her a better woman."

Mr. Maydig put down the glass and looked doubtful. "She's— She strongly objects to interference, you know, Mr. Fotheringay. And—as a matter of fact—it's well past eleven and she's probably in bed and asleep. Do you think, on the whole—"

Mr. Fotheringay considered these objections. "I don't see that it shouldn't be done in her sleep."

For a time Mr. Maydig opposed the idea, and then he yielded. Mr. Fotheringay issued his orders, and a little less at their ease, perhaps, the two gentlemen proceeded with their repast. Mr. Maydig was enlarging on the changes he might expect in his housekeeper next day, with an optimism that seemed even to Mr. Fotheringay's supper senses a little forced and hectic, when a series of confused noises from upstairs began. Their eyes exchanged interrogations, and Mr. Maydig left the room hastily. Mr. Fotheringay heard him calling up to his housekeeper and then his footsteps going softly up to her.

In a minute or so the minister returned, his step light, his face radiant. "Wonderful!" he said, "and touching! Most touching!"

He began pacing the hearth-rug. "A repentance—a most touching repentance—through the crack of the door. Poor woman! A most wonderful change!

She had got up. She must have got up at once. She had got up out of her sleep to smash a private bottle of brandy in her box. And to confess it too! . . . But this gives us—it opens—a most amazing vista of possibilities. If we can work this miraculous change in her . . . ?

"The thing's unlimited seemingly," said Mr. Fotheringay. "And about Mr. Winch—"

"Altogether unlimited." And from the hearth-rug Mr. Maydig, waving the Winch difficulty aside, unfolded a series of wonderful proposals—proposals he invented as he went along.

Now what those proposals were does not concern the essentials of this story. Suffice it that they were designed in a spirit of infinite benevolence, the sort of benevolence that used to be called post-prandial. Suffice it, too, that the problem of Winch remained unsolved. Nor is it necessary to describe how far that series got to its fulfilment. There were astonishing changes. The small hours found Mr. Maydig and Mr. Fotheringay careering across the chilly market-square under the still moon,

in a sort of ecstasy of thaumaturgy, Mr. Maydig all flap and gesture, Mr. Fotheringay short and bristling, and no longer abashed at his greatness. They had reformed every drunkard in the Parliamentary division, changed all the beer and alcohol to water (Mr. Maydig had overruled Mr. Fotheringay on this point); they had, further, greatly improved the railway communication of the place, drained Flinder's swamp, improved the soil of One Tree Hill, and cured the Vicar's wart. And they were going to see what could be done with the injured pier at South Bridge. "The place," gasped Mr. Maydig, "won't be the same place to-morrow. How surprised and thankful everyone will be!" And just at that moment the church clock struck three.

"I say," said Mr. Fotheringay, "that's three o'clock! I must be getting back. I've got to be at business by eight. And besides, Mrs. Wimms—"

"We're only beginning," said Mr. Maydig; full of the sweetness of unlimited power. "We're only beginning. Think of all the good we're doing. When people wake—"



Mr. Maydig gripped his arm suddenly. His eyes were bright and wild. . . He pointed at the moon at the zenith.

"But—" said Mr. Fotheringay.

Mr. Maydig gripped his arm suddenly. His eyes were bright and wild. "My dear chap," he said, "there's no hurry. Look"—he pointed to the moon at the zenith—"Joshua!"

"Joshua?" said Mr. Fotheringay.

"Joshua," said Mr. Maydig. "Why not? Stop it."

Mr. Fotheringay looked at the moon.

"That's a bit tall," he said after a pause.

"Why not?" said Mr. Maydig. "Of course it doesn't stop. You stop the rotation of the earth, you know. Time stops. It isn't as if we were doing harm."

"H'm!" said Mr. Fotheringay. "Well." He sighed. "I'll try. Here—"



*Incontinently he was flying
head over heels through the air at the rate
of dozens of miles a minute.*

He buttoned up his jacket and addressed himself to the habitable globe, with as good an assumption of confidence as lay in his power. "Jest stop rotating, will you," said Mr. Fotheringay.

Incontinently he was flying head over heels through the air at the rate of dozens of miles a minute. In spite of the innumerable circles he was describing per second, he thought; for thought is wonderful—sometimes as sluggish as flowing pitch, sometimes as instantaneous as light. He thought in a second, and willed. "Let me come down safe and sound. Whatever else happens, let me down safe and sound."

He willed it only just in time, for his clothes, heated by his rapid flight through the air, were already beginning to singe. He came down with a forcible, but by no means injurious bump in what appeared to be a mound of fresh-turned earth. A large mass of metal and masonry, extraordinarily like the clock-tower in the middle of the market-square, hit the earth near him, ricochetted over him, and flew into stonework, bricks, and masonry, like a bursting bomb. A hurtling cow hit one of the larger blocks and smashed like an egg. There was a crash that

made all the most violent crashes of his past life seem like the sound of falling dust, and this was followed by a descending series of lesser crashes. A vast wind roared throughout earth and heaven, so that he could scarcely lift his head to look. For a while he was too breathless and astonished even to see where he was or what had happened. And his first movement was to feel his head and reassure himself that his streaming hair was still his own.

"Lord!" gasped Mr. Fotheringay, scarce able to speak for the gale, "I've had a squeak! What's gone wrong? Storms and thunder. And only a minute ago a fine night. It's Maydig set me on to this sort of thing. What a wind! If I go on fooling in this way I'm bound to have a thundering accident! . . ."

"Where's Maydig?"

"What a confounded mess everything's in!

He looked about him so far as his flapping jacket would permit. The appearance of things was really extremely strange. "The sky's all right anyhow," said Mr. Fotheringay. "And that's about all that is all right. And even there it looks like a terrific gale coming up. But there's the moon overhead. Just as it was just now. Bright as midday. But as for the rest— Where's the village? Where's—where's anything? And what on earth set this wind a-blowing? I didn't order no wind."

Mr. Fotheringay struggled to get to his feet in vain, and after one failure, remained on all fours, holding on. He surveyed the moonlit world to leeward, with the tails of his jacket streaming over his head. "There's something seriously wrong," said Mr. Fotheringay. "And what it is—goodness knows."

Far and wide nothing was visible in the white glare through the haze of dust that drove before a screaming gale but tumbled masses of earth and heaps of inchoate ruins, no trees, no houses, no familiar shapes, only a wilderness of disorder vanishing at last

into the darkness beneath the whirling columns and streamers, the lightnings and thunderings of a swiftly rising storm. Near him in the livid glare was something that might once have been an elm-tree, a smashed mass of splinters, shivered from boughs to base, and further a twisted mass of iron girders—only too evidently the viaduct—rose out of the piled confusion.

You see, when Mr. Fotheringay had arrested the rotation of the solid globe, he had made no stipulation concerning the trifling movables upon its surface. And the earth spins so fast that the surface at its equator is travelling at rather more than a thousand miles an hour, and in these latitudes at more than half that pace. So that the village, and Mr. Maydig, and Mr. Fotheringay, and everybody and everything had been jerked violently forward at about nine miles per second—that is to say, much more violently than if they had been fired out of a cannon. And every human being, every living creature, every house, and every tree—all the world as we know it—had been so jerked and smashed and utterly destroyed. That was all.

These things Mr. Fotheringay did not, of course, fully appreciate. But he perceived that his miracle had miscarried, and with that a great disgust of miracles came upon him. He was in darkness now, for the clouds had swept together and blotted out his momentary glimpse of the moon, and the air was full of fitful struggling tortured wraiths of hail. A great roaring of wind and waters filled earth and sky, and, peering under his hand through the dust and sleet to windward, he saw by the play of the lightnings a vast wall of water pouring towards him.

"Maydig!" screamed Mr. Fotheringay's feeble voice amid the elemental uproar. "Here!—Maydig!"

"Stop!" cried Mr. Fotheringay to the advancing water. "Oh, for goodness' sake, stop!"

"Jest a moment," said Mr. Fotheringay to the lightnings and thunder,

will, and all these dangerous miracles be stopped. I don't like them. I'd rather I didn't work 'em. Ever so much. That's the first thing. And the second is—let me be back just before the miracles begin; let everything be just as it was before that blessed lamp turned up. It's a big job, but it's the last. Have you got it? No more miracles, everything as it was—me back in the Long Dragon just before I drank my half-pint. That's it! Yes."

He dug his fingers into the mould, closed his eyes, and said "Off!"

Everything became perfectly still. He perceived that he was standing erect.

"So you say," said a voice.

He opened his eyes. He was in the bar of the Long Dragon, arguing about miracles with Toddy Beamish. He had a vague sense of some great thing



He remained on all fours, leaning against the wind, very intent to have everything right.

"Stop jest a moment while I collect my thoughts. . . . And now what shall I do?" he said. "What shall I do? Lord! I wish Maydig was about."

"I know," said Mr. Fotheringay. "And for goodness' sake let's have it right this time."

He remained on all fours, leaning against the wind, very intent to have everything right.

"Ah!" he said. "Let nothing what I'm going to order happen until I say 'Off!' . . . Lord! I wish I'd thought of that before!"

He lifted his little voice against the whirlwind, shouting louder and louder in the vain desire to hear himself speak. "Now then!—here goes! Mind about that what I said just now. In the first place, when all I've got to say is done, let me lose my miraculous power, let my will become just like anybody else's

forgotten that instantaneously passed. You see that, except for the loss of his miraculous powers, everything was back as it had been, his mind and memory therefore were now just as they had been at the time when this story began. So that he knew absolutely nothing of all that is told here, knows nothing of all that is told here to this day. And among other things, of course, he still did not believe in miracles.

"I tell you that miracles, properly speaking, can't possibly happen," he said, "whatever you like to hold. And I'm prepared to prove it up to the hilt."

"That's what *you* think," said Toddy Beamish, and "Prove it if you can."

"Looky here, Mr. Beamish," said Mr. Fotheringay. "Let us clearly understand what a miracle is. It's something contrariwise to the course of nature done by power of Will. . . ."

A PASTEL.

Wild-bird caged in city grim,
Drooping sans the fevered streets,
Head of logic, heart of whim,
Strong-willed, weak-willed, colds and heats.

Box of melodies at strife,
Pagan, Christian, humble, vain,
Craving death—and fuller life;
Paris—or Siena's fane.

Purse-forgetting business-man,
Counting gain on fingers slim,
Socialist the world to scan
Through the tears that doubly dim.

Rosy revolutionist,
Preaching loud the reign of Peace,
While her pretty lips unkist
Wars of man and man increase.
* * * * *

Raise me from the arid dust,
Kindle faiths and dreams forgone,
Shining eyes of love and trust,
Breast to rest a life upon!

I. ZANGWILL.

CHILD or woman as you please,
Gravely young or gaily old,
Muse to fire and minx to tease,
Loving, yet how pure and cold!

Diana with a colour-box,
Scorning all the sex of man,
Sweetly-glancing Paradox,
Angel and Bohemian.



ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT SAUBER.

GUILLAUMETTE heard the ring of noois upon the road behind her, and told herself, to her concern, that it would be old Berthelot, the miller, coming back from Grenoble. Quickly and impulsively, she snatched up her pitcher, and threw a kiss to a young harvester who was busy in the vineyard below. Then she began to run swiftly toward the village.

"*Célébrons, célèbrons, célèbrons ce beau jour.*"

She had sung the same line a hundred times that morning, for the sun fell strong upon the road to the mountains; and in the glorious valley of the Isère, by which her way lay, there was music of many voices, and the tremor of leaves and merry workers among the vines, and the spirit of harvest everywhere.

Guillaumette would have rejoiced if she might have escaped her dreary duties at the house of old Berthelot and have joined those busy people in the sunshine of the valley; but such a holiday was not for her. She feared her uncle as she feared no one else in all the province. She was the slave of his house—the drudge, the victim of his charity. And yet many a stranger had stayed in the hamlet to ask news of her; many a one had carried away to the mountains a memory of those black eyes and of that round young face which had bewitched him as he rested in the inn at Voreppe.

"It will be my uncle," she said to herself as she hastened on her way, "and he will have forgotten something—to box the ears of Jules, perhaps, or to lock the bookcase. *Ma foi!* and the beds are not yet made and the fire is out in the kitchen—"

The appalling consequences which might attend these omissions quickened her steps and brought colour to her cheek. She forgot her ballad and began to run toward the village, swinging the pitcher without a thought for its contents. Old Berthelot must not find her out there, idling in the sunshine. It would mean more lies to him, and the priest would be cross. Nevertheless, she began to think about the particular excuse she would make, and had it to her satisfaction, and good enough, she hoped, to cheat even Monsieur l'Abbé, when the nearer approach of the horse, and the sharp ring of iron upon the road, told her unmistakably that there was no need for any excuse at all, and that her uncle was no more on the way to the farm than to the city of Paris herself.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, stopping suddenly and panting for her breath, "what a baby!—to run away

from shadows. As if the old grey mare could gallop like that; and Giuseppe, to leave him there alone! He will not speak to me on Sunday—and then, and then —"

She was standing now, gazing down the white road and over the valley of vineyards wherefrom the young harvester still watched her. Her shoes were white with dust; the glare of the noon sun fell upon a face ripe with health and the colour of youth. Convinced that it was not her uncle who returned, she had no thought for the horseman who came so swiftly toward her. She hardly saw him until he, drawing rein at the picturesque

*The monk, a man of seventy years of age, lifted his lantern that he might look at the face of the stranger.*

figure which barred his way, put a question to her, and repeated it before she had found the courage of an answer.

"The road to Voreppe—I am upon that, Mademoiselle?"

She blushed at the address, for no one in the village had ever called her anything but Guillaumette. And the man who spoke had a pleasant voice which remained a good memory for the ear. When she looked up timidly, she said to herself that he would be an English "milord" going to the great monastery of La Grande Chartreuse, which lies above the valley of the Isère. He, in his turn, saw a pretty French girl, who might have been any age between fifteen and twenty—a girl whose scarlet jupon and short blue skirts were a picturesque blotch of colour against the background of the vines; a coquette, whose eyes sparkled as the wine which those vineyards gave.

"The road to Voreppe—you know that, child?"

She nodded her head.

"I thought you were my uncle Berthelot," she said laughingly, "and—*ma foi!*—but of course this is the road. All the world knows that."

cell and hear a monk say his prayers. Have they no priests, then, in their own country?"

The traveller laughed at her simple philosophy. It was the first time since he had left Paris, three days ago, that a smile had crossed his face; but the girl's babble awakened him as from a dream.

"So," he said thoughtfully, "the monks have an enemy even upon the road to Voreppe?"

She shrugged her shoulders disdainfully.

"No one here is the friend of the monastery," she replied, taking him quite seriously. "It is true that they give to the poor—a loaf of black bread after you have climbed the mountain road to get it. Oh! *c'est drôle ça*—that one should walk five miles to get a loaf of bread. And they are not the friends of the people, Monsieur. They say that there is life up there in the cells and the great bare church. *Ma foi!* the life is here in the sunshine and the vineyards."

The man ceased to laugh. For a moment he looked at the young face;



He remembered that it would be the hour of Matins, and he followed the monks through the cloister.

She tossed her head, as much as to say "What a silly question!" She could see now that the traveller's eyes were strangely bright and that his black hair was flecked with grey. But his dress was in a fashion unknown to Voreppe, for he wore great brown boots of leather to his hips, and his riding-coat was of a fine grey cloth, and a diamond sparkled upon the little finger of his left hand. He would be a very great milord indeed, Guillaumette said.

Pleased with this assurance, she found her tongue again, and set her pitcher on the low wall of the road, as though glad of an excuse to linger yet a little while in the sunshine. The man had continued to look at her with curious eyes and to permit his jaded horse a moment's respite after the heat of the gallop. He seemed like one who realised but a little of the hour and the scene. He had ridden from Grenoble through one of the most beautiful valleys of Europe, yet never once had paused to say that it was beautiful.

"You go to Voiron; then it is to the monastery," she said, shaking her little head wisely. "There are many who go there—milords of England, and once a Queen, and the yellow-haired men from across the sea who laugh at everything and throw us money—all go to the monastery. Oh, *cela m'amuse*, Monsieur, that men should come across the sea to sleep in a

then he saw for the first time that there was a beautiful valley at his feet, and that vines clothed the valley, and that harvesters made a music of voices there, and that beyond the valley mountains lifted their snowy heads, and a vast amphitheatre of peaks for the utmost boundary of a rocky river whose waters were as a vein of silver in the heart of that insurpassable country.

"Come," he said, speaking again after a spell of silence, "I must know the name of the philosopher of Voreppe?"

"I am no philosopher, Monsieur; I am only Guillaumette—and my uncle is a miller. We live at the white house over against the river; you will find the inn just beyond it."

"You think that I must go to the inn, Guillaumette?"

She seemed astonished at the question.

"Everyone goes to the inn," she said with childish irony; "what else is there to do? The same horses bring them, they return at the same hour, Monsieur, they look up at the church and cry beautiful—oh, *c'est drôle*, to come so far to see a church. And you will say it is beautiful, too, Monsieur. I shall hear you laugh. You will be with Rupert, the guide, and he will rob you, *là bas*. It is always like that when a stranger comes to Voreppe."

Edmond Dubourg, for such was the traveller's name, regarded her with unconcealed amazement.

"Oh," he said, "surely my luck is bad to-day."

"And why so, Monsieur?"

"Because I am not your uncle Berthelot—for whom you were waiting."

She kicked the stone wall with her heels and began to crush the blossoms in her hand.

"I do not think that," she said quietly; "it is only when my uncle goes to Grenoble that I am in the vineyards. He is like your monks, Monsieur; he does not wish to see the sunshine. And he thinks that women should not be—*v'là!* he would bury his head in the sand that he might not see them laughing at him."

She spoke defiantly, as though she were the champion of her sex; and Dubourg did not conceal his amusement. He knew little of peasants or of their homes; but he said that here, certainly, was the most amusing and the prettiest creature he had ever seen on the roads of France.

"Well," he said, "you are hard upon the fathers up there, Guillaumette. When I am one of them, I shall do my best—"

She cut him short with a merry peal of laughter.

"Oh, *c'est ben*, to speak of that! You one of the fathers—you, milord! And you will wear those boots and ride that horse! You will eat the black bread and live in the darkness! You will never see the sun again! Oh, *cela vous fait de grande chose!*"

The very idea amused her beyond words. She snatched up her pitcher and began to trudge along toward the village. Even when the turn of the road hid her from his sight, he could hear her singing—

"*Célébrons, célèbrons, célèbrons ce beau jour!*"

Minutes passed before Dubourg made haste to follow her. He was still conscious of a glorious valley, green and gold in the zenith of the day; he still heard the music of harvesters and the song of the river. His face, prematurely old and worn with many griefs, seemed for a moment reanimated and softened by the spirit of his lost youth. He breathed the sweet breezes coming down from the mountains, and they were as a gift of strength to him. A voice whispered in his ear the echo of her words: "Life is here in the sunshine and the vineyards."

Guillaumette was almost in the village when the traveller spoke to her for the second time.

"Mademoiselle," he said, as he rode up to her, "you have forgotten something."

"Monsieur!"

"Surely—you are running off and forgetting to say good-bye to me."

"You will return to-morrow, Monsieur, and I shall say it then."

"Not so, Guillaumette, I shall never return."

"Oh! trust an English milord to be fooled long up there."

"Then you think that I shall come back?"

"At mid-day to-morrow you will take your *déjeuner* at the Inn of the Two Swans."

"You will be there to see me?"

"Perhaps, if uncle Berthelot does not come back from Grenoble."

"But, Mademoiselle, who is to save me from the rapacity of the guide Rupert?"

She shook her head; she did not follow him.

"Are you a child?" she exclaimed.

He laughed at her bluntness.

"Tell me, Guillaumette, do you know the road to the Grande Chartreuse?"

"I have said it, Monsieur: this is the road. All the world knows that."

"Yes, but I am not all the world. And since I do not know it, what do you think of the idea of coming a little way with me?"

She shook her head.

"If my uncle should return!" she said.

He laughed at her scruples.

"The sun shines up yonder," he said, "and there will be an inn where we can get a drink of milk. I shall wait for you at the bridge beyond the village."

II.

She left him at sunset, at a place they call the desert, a gloomy defile in which the monastery of the Grande Chartreuse is built. They had drunk their glass of milk together in the village of Voiron, and thereafter she had run at his side or ridden sometimes upon his horse. The grandeur of the rugged pass, the terrible, fantastic boulders of rock, the sighing of torrents, the roar of cascading streams awed her always; but upon that day when Edmond Dubourg came to Voreppe, she thought that she was living in a world apart, riding with some King through the mountains of Dreamland. His very words were different from any she had heard in all her life. The whiteness of his hands, the delicacy and softness of his clothes appealed to her strangely. And beyond all was the mystery of his story: that he would never return to the sunshine when once the gate of the monastery had closed upon him.

This determination he had repeated again and again as he carried her through the gloomy pass, upward to the distant monastery which henceforth must be his home. And it was odd, he thought, that he, who had spoken of none of these things in Paris, who had left all, friends and enemies and the battle-field of life, should come to tell a part at least of his story to a peasant girl, sent by some wind of destiny to the road he must follow. Yet he talked to her as he would have talked to his own sister. The touch of her hand, when he lifted her up to his saddle, thrilled him as no touch had done during all the years of intrigue and of success which had contributed to this final, this irrevocable defeat. Her coarse dress moved him to no sensation of repugnance. She was fresh as one of her own flowers gathered at the roadside. Her simple view of things was as a draught of sparkling water after the heat of a city's night. She could amuse him and make him laugh in a breath. And he had not laughed for many a long day.

"You are not telling me the truth," she had said; "to-morrow you will be in the village again. I shall see you at the Inn of the Two Swans."

"You will never see me again, Guillaumette," he answered.

"Then you are in trouble, Monsieur?"

"And if I am?"

She nodded her head as though all the wisdom of the ancients were hers.

"If you are, you will not forget it up there. We do not forget things when we shut ourselves up with them and say every day, 'This is why we were sorry yesterday.' Down yonder, where the river laughs, one can begin again there. God is in the fields, Monsieur. He has made things beautiful—and *là haut*—there is no beauty there. Oh! you will come back. You were not born to lie on a bed of straw and to eat black bread. To-morrow I shall see you and say, 'There goes milord, back to his own country!'"

This had been her word of farewell to him at Guiers-Morts, where she leaped down from the saddle, and struggled to free herself from the grasp of his hand, which held her wrist so tightly.

"*Ma foi!*" she said, "Uncle Berthelot will be home—and then! I must go back now, Monsieur. You cannot lose your way. It is all dark, dark, dark as a cavern at twilight. And where there is no day at all—there is the monastery."

He drew her towards him and kissed her forehead.

"Good-bye, Guillaumette—if ever I come again I will remember who lives at Voreppe."

"You will come again, Monsieur, to-morrow."

She wrenched herself free and ran away quickly toward the village. He saw the scarlet and the blue of her skirts bright against the gloomy walls of mossless rock. She looked back once and kissed her hand to him. Then the road shut her from his sight and he was alone. An hour later his horse carried him out of the gloomy defile to the monastery doors, and he stood at his journey's end.

It was a wild place, a niche in the rocks far above the glorious valley he had left. Around him on all sides were the jagged peaks or the cusp-like domes of the mountains. Huge boulders of rock, hewn by the ages, took the shapes of human things, of heads twisted and distorted, of beasts in grotesque attitude, even of the walls of strange palaces and of unearthly temples of silence. As far as the eye could see to the north and west the panorama of crests and pinnacles extended. Here it would be a range of bold hills grown purple in the soft lights of evening, there a monarch uprising with white head and majestic dignity, as



"Nay," he said, "I know that he is mourning for a son who is dead to him."

though ruling an empire of the snows. But everywhere there were mountains, and the valley lay in their heart as a fair garden to which they stood sentinels.

Edmond Dubourg stood for an instant spellbound by the witchery of the scene and the place. Below, in that valley of flowers, the world he was leaving seemed to lie; above him, at the door of the monastery, desolation and death. Yet here, he said, was the haven which had seemed so good in the hour of his ultimate distress. Years ago, at Oxford, when zealots had taught him the truths of the new Anglicanism, he had dreamed of a life to which no sound of the world should come, of a life speaking peace and the fellowship of the soul and perpetual communion with the heavenly mysteries. Destiny had carried him from such a life then—but now, in the day of a grief passing words, in the day of poverty and shame, what home should be found except in such a house of God as that journey had carried him to? He could see no other way; the dreams of his youth were to bring him rest at last.

Darkness fell upon the valley; the peaks lost their raiment of dazzling hues; a cold wind began to moan in the desolate pass. The man turned from the scene and rang at the bell before the great door of the monastery. The echo of its note was like a minor chord struck in a temple of death. The steps of the old monk, who came from his cell at the summons, were as a great sound in a hall vaulted and empty.

"I am Edmond Dubourg, an Englishman, and I come to put myself at the disposal of the prior. Is it possible to see him now, Father?"

The monk, a man of seventy years of age, lifted his lantern that he might look at the face of the stranger. A smile, scarcely perceptible, hovered about his mouth when the inspection was over.

"The monastery is open to travellers," he said quietly. "If you will wait a moment, I will send someone to look after your horse."

"Show me the stable, and I will look after him myself, Father. You see, he is not used to strangers, and he might be troublesome. We are old friends, we two."

The monk smiled again.

"Monsieur," he said, "we have horses here every night. When you go to find yours tomorrow you shall not complain of him."

The Englishman bit his lip. Here was the second person that day who had refused to take him seriously. But he said nothing to the monk. It would be time enough, he thought, when he was face to face with the prior.

"Well," he exclaimed, "if you think so, Father. And afterwards, if one could sup—I have ridden from Grenoble, and there was dust upon the road."

The old man answered him with a sympathetic nod of the head. A lay brother came up to lead away the horse. The door in the corridor was shut, and the monk conducted the Englishman to a great guest-room, which overlooked the desolate valley.

"Supper will be in half an hour," he said. "Meanwhile, here is your bed-room. I will send hot water and anything else you wish."

The room was very bare, though well warmed and not lacking the elementary comforts. A lay brother brought hot water, and Dubourg washed off the dust of the road from his face and hands. It was a discomfort to him to be unable to change his clothes, and he would have been grateful for such a luxury as a hot bath. If he had been in Paris or in London at such an hour, his valet would have been busy with him, he said. A dozen possible engagements would have been open for the night. But he had done with all that. The impulse to forget the grief which had driven him from cities was still upon him. He had known trouble enough. The noise of the world still rang in his ears. He would find silence in the mountains.

A bell ringing dolefully summoned him from his bed-room. He went to the guest-chamber to meet others there—a half-pay Colonel from Malvern who could talk of nothing but soldiers; a couple of climbers who discussed peaks to the point of boredom; a fat English clergyman who declared, vulgarly, that he had

no belief in the monastic system, though some of the fathers of the monastery appeared to be kindly men. The meal was, in its way, excellent. A tiny glass of the exquisite yellow liqueur passed for *hors d'œuvre*; fish from the river in the valley was served with delicious butter; eggs and the whitest of bread took the place of joint and *rôti*. When supper was done, all went out to the plateau before the monastery gate to see the moonlight upon the crags of the pass—an enchanting scene of stillness and beauty, as though the whole glory of the heavens were open here to those who kept the perpetual vigil.

Dubourg watched the scene apart. Unconsciously, he had taken a cigar-case from his pocket and lighted a cigar which would have cost half-a-crown in London. A strange sense of rest was his, but no longer was it rest of the cloister and the cell. Out there in the moonbeams, down yonder in the golden valley, was the medicine which ministered to his weary brain. For the first time for many a day that whirl of life, which made his brain dizzy, had ceased. He began to recall the stages in the journey which had carried him from the houses of pleasure to the abyss of ruin—and, finally, on the maddest journey of all, which ended at the gates of the monastery. And to this there succeeded a memory of little Guillaumette, of her black eyes and her soft, round arms and her pretty ankles peeping out from skirts of blue and crimson. He recalled the faces of all the women he had known, and asked himself why none of them had awakened in him such a strange and sensuous realisation of man's love for woman. A primitive

sensation, he admitted, yet as real and as satisfying as the wonders of the valley wherein he had found its author.

A bell was ringing for compline when he returned to the building and to his room. Somehow, nor could he account for it, his repugnance to his coarse surroundings grew every moment. The habits of the fathers seemed gowns so rough that their contact with the flesh must be an irritation not to be supported. The dream of the old Oxford days was dissolving minute by minute—the dream of a home amidst books and those who lived for books and for the unbroken silence of life. Yet, when he undressed and lay down upon his rude bed, it was to recall neither the world he had left nor the friends who were friends no more—but the face of

Guillaumette and the words she had spoken in the village of Voreppe.

"Life is down here, in the vineyards and the sunshine." The words echoed in his ears again and again, until a step in the passage without awoke him from this light and fitful sleep very early in the morning. It was still dark, and when he opened the door of his cell he observed a white figure holding a taper and passing as a shadow in the gloom of the cloister. Again the doleful bell began to toll, and other monks carrying dim lanterns passed through the darkness to the chapel beyond. He remembered that it would be the hour of Matins, and he dressed quickly, following the monks through the cloister to the open door of the chapel. In all there might have been a dozen of them, white-garbed men who had eaten the fruit of the years, and were gleaners now in the fields of the unknown. Faces worn with age and fasting, faces bearing the impress of grief unforgotten, faces illumined with the strange light of the eternal hope, were to be discerned by the fitful rays which the lanterns cast. No candles flickered upon the darkened altars; the wind without moaned as an angry sea; the chapel was almost in darkness. The whispering voices of the monks were as a sound of muted despair or foreboding. Dubourg seemed to be standing in some place of terror and of mystery. The silence and the darkness overwhelmed him. The mad impulse of which he had been the victim could be hidden from him no longer.

"Great God!" he said, "and this is the religious life!"

About an hour afterwards, when the sun had begun to scatter a glorious radiance upon the awakening peaks, the prior of the monastery came to speak to him as he wished. He was a very old man, yet his step was firm, and a ruddy glow of health suffused his cheeks. Dubourg, who had spent many years of his life in



"Olà!" she said, clapping her hands, "you are going then to the vineyards and the sunshine, Monsieur?"

Paris, knew by instinct that he was face to face with one of France's noblemen. The manner of the prior was that of a father speaking to a son. He seemed to read without an effort the story of the man who, like so many others, had been carried by the impulse of grief, or temper, or ruin, to the gates of his monastery.

"My son," he said gently, as he took the Englishman's arm and began to walk up and down the cloister with him, "they tell me that you wished to speak to me."

Dubourg, restless in the clear light of morning, perhaps ashamed already of his impulse, confessed his difficulty readily.

"I wished to speak to you last night—to-day, I fear that I have little to say."

The old priest nodded his head.

"It is always like that," he said, "to-night, the cloister—to-morrow, the road again. And why should it not be so, my son? In every life there are many pages—pages wherein we write of many things: now of our faith, now of our doubts, at other times of love and riches and trouble and ambition. Blot one of these pages out and another must be turned. You have blotted out the pages of riches and of woman's love, and you turn back to those words you wrote in your childhood before you had realised what love and riches meant. When a man comes to such a place as this to stay—he is one who has turned the whole book and has no more pages to read. The impulse to the religious life is the least sure of all our impulses. It is the last refuge of him who has lost all else."

He spoke openly, reading the mind of the other as one from whom the secrets of men were not to be hidden.

Dubourg answered him with a candour no less than his own—

"When I left Paris," he said bluntly, "I had lived my life. What I came to offer you was the memory of a day when I thought that such a house as this might be a home to me. I know now that it can never be. The alternative is—God knows! The pistol, perhaps—there is always that way."

The priest gripped his arm firmly.

"If that had been the way, it would not have carried you to the mountains of Isère," he said gently. "Such men as you do not leave shame as a legacy to their children and their children's children."

Dubourg smiled.

"That is no reason—in my case."

"It is a reason in the case of us all, my son! There is none so friendless that some child shall not remember his name, some woman repeat that name in

joy or in affliction. You cannot tell me that it is otherwise with you. And you will live for such as these. For such as these you will return to your father's house to-day."

Dubourg started.

"You are a prophet, Father!"

The Prior shrugged his shoulders.

"A very simple prophet—who learnt your story by telegraph last night."

"You know that my father is living, then?"

The Priest turned and laid his hand upon the other's shoulder.

"Nay," he said, "I know that he is mourning for a son who is dead to him. Your monastery is there, Monsieur Dubourg—in your father's house."

His thin fingers were busy in the pocket of his habit as he spoke. When they had fumbled there a little while he took out a telegram and pressed it into the Englishman's hand. Dubourg read it with eyes half-blinded—a voice from the dead past seemed to speak to him.

"Yes," he said at last; "my way lies to my father's house."

III.

The village of Voreppe was still asleep when he rode through; but Guillaumette, the niece of Berthelot the miller, waited for him at the door of her house.

"*Olà!*" she said, clapping her hands, "you are going then to the vineyards and the sunshine, Monsieur?"

He reined in his horse as the picturesque little figure confronted him.

"So," he cried, "Guillaumette wakes with the birds?"

She laughed and blushed at his words.

"They did not know for whom the telegram was," she exclaimed, with pretty confusion, "but I guessed and took it up to the monastery, Monsieur. There are ghosts on the road, but I saw none of them. 'The Englishman goes back to the sunshine,' I said."

He drew her towards him and kissed her forehead.

"I go to the sunshine and the vineyards," he answered; "they will teach me to remember Guillaumette."

He rode on at the gallop; but Guillaumette stood at the door of her house long after the cloud of dust had floated from his path.

"To-morrow he will forget," she said.

AN INDIAN SUMMER.

BY SIR WALTER BESANT.

IT is a long step back to the 'Fifties. Why, a man born in the middle of the 'Fifties is now over forty; he is past early manhood, he is past the "first sprightly flow," as Dryden called it; he has become what Shakspere calls a "good old chronicle." "Wait till you come to forty year," Thackeray sighed, with a sob in his voice and a tear in his eye. "Never the same man after forty," says another sage. What, then, of the unfortunates who actually attained their majority in the 'Fifties? The 'Nineties bring these poor creatures into their sixties, after which it is felt by the young, that a man should put up the shutters, and, like Miss Knag's romantic brother, "close the warehouse."

The little history which follows is all about two people who did arrive at their twenty-first year in the 'Fifties. Though they were young people they were old friends. It is an astonishing thing that the younger we are the older are our friends. Thus does nature still pamper and indulge youth. In the year 'fifty-one, to be exact, the young man was twenty-one and the girl eighteen.

Twenty-one and eighteen are two delightful ages for a pair of lovers—over young, maybe, for this cold climate; over old, perhaps, for the warmer air of Verona. But as these two were not lovers, this fine point for critical consideration did not present itself.

The young man was the son of the Vicar; I believe he had eleven brothers and sisters, all of whom have done well except one daughter, who ran away from her post in a girls' school (which she abhorred) to marry a bagman, and is consequently never mentioned in the family. Yet, by report, a good bagman. One of the sons, too—but we are not concerned with the rest of the numerous arrows of the paternal quiver. Our young man was the eldest son.

The girl was the only daughter of one who belonged to a class even then becoming rare: her father, in fact, was a Nabob, a retired officer of John Company. He had spent forty years in India without coming home. This girl was his only child: he had brought away with him so many lakhs of rupees that one understands something of the present poverty now hanging over India. He was the new squire who had bought out the old family. Nobody wept for the departure of the old family: there was no sentimental regret for them. The new man neither gambled nor drank nor bullied the people: he was quite a kindly

Nabob: but he had one ambition which he did not conceal: he wished his daughter to obtain a coronet, by the quick and certain method open to girls, namely, by marriage. He was of so kindly a nature that he gave the Vicar the run of his library; and the Vicar's sons the shooting and the fishing; and the Vicar's daughters the run of his house; and to sons and daughters alike the daily companionship of his daughter: more than this, because the boy's father was poor and the boy's future was dubious but probably lowly, he sent one to Haileybury with a nomination into the service of the Company. And if you want to know what that meant you must carry your memory back fifty years, and you will then see, in imagination, the crowd of applicants besieging the doors of the Company; you must behold the myriads, the showers of letters daily delivered at the doors of the Governors, praying for a writership, a commission in the Indian Army, a midshipman's berth in the Indian Navy. As for the other boys and girls, he sent one to Cambridge; and one—but again their history does not belong to us. However, he was a kindly Nabob.

Of course, the experienced reader perceives, with such opportunities as unlimited companionship, with walks, rides, fishing, reading, talking together, the young couple naturally fell in love with each other. The experienced reader is quite wrong. That is what happens as a rule: in this case it did not happen, although they were really made for each other, and understood each other, and thought about each other all the time. I admit that in this way love may sometimes begin. But the young man knew, and the girl knew, the Nabob's design as to the daughter's future. And there is such a thing as respect for your benefactor's confidence, and even loyalty to a parent's wishes. So that, you see, they did not fall in love.

They were walking along one of the galleries in the Great Exhibition, which, as is related in ancient history, was open all through the summer of the year 1851. The galleries contained the less showy exhibits—the plainer industries, the work-a-day manufactures; while all the pretty things were spread out cunningly down below. Consequently, there were fewer visitors in the galleries. Mostly they consisted of family parties come up from the country. These unhappy people got up into the galleries as to a position of vantage; they trailed around with

lack-lustre eyes; they lost themselves among the cottons and the unbleached products and the furniture; and they wandered up and down miserably till the policeman dragged them out at sunset—limp, hungry, tearful, and weary. Next day they went home and bragged about the dissipations of London.

The pair had left the Nabob down below while they explored the labyrinthine galleries. They were not looking much at the cottons and stuffs, nor at the sofas and chairs: they were talking about themselves, which is a more interesting way of getting through the time. The young man, on whose cheeks there was beginning the first down of whiskers, wore his hair long: it was also rendered glossy and wavy by pomatum's artful aid: it fell over his ears and almost over his shoulders: he wore "all round" collars, such as Mr. Gladstone used to wear, and his face was full of animation, because his life was just about to begin, and the tall East Indiaman was ready to sail, and would drop down the river in a day or two. The girl, for her part, was possessed of many charms, but the most remarkable was a face whose regular features—almost Greek in outline—were stamped with a certain sweetness and purity such as would adorn a nun.

Surrounded as they were with illustrations—monumental illustrations—of England's greatness as displayed by her cottons and her stuffs—I do not think the coal was up there—these young people heeded nothing and talked about nothing but themselves.

"Oh, George!" the girl sighed. "You are going away, and I shall never see you again. Papa was forty years in India without ever coming home."

"They come home oftener now—I dare say in fifteen years—or perhaps—twenty—"

"And I shall be an old woman then. You will get rich, George. . . ." Observe that they did not contemplate, in those days, distinguished service and the Star of India—but money-bags—sordid thought! Yet they say that India was as well ruled then as now. "You will get rich," she repeated. "I shall think of that."

"I hope so. And you will marry a noble Lord and be a great lady of fashion."

"If I do, George, I shall never forget you—never."

"Well, Clarinda"—in those ancient days they used to call girls by such names as this—"I promise that whenever I come home again, you will be the first person I shall visit."

"And I promise you, George, that I shall welcome you as joyfully then as I should now. Can I say more?"

They shook hands over it with a warm and loyal pressure. I have said that they were not in love. Then they left the gallery and found the Nabob and the governess nodding on a bench beside the Koh-i-Noor: and they all walked away together: the Nabob with the young man, followed by the governess and the young lady. They went to a hotel in Jermyn Street, where at six o'clock they had dinner, and with dinner an excellent bottle of Madeira, and after dinner a bottle of port—that of '34—while the Nabob discoursed upon India and offered practical advice as to the shaking of the pagoda tree.

II.

At four o'clock Sir George entered the card-room of the club, where there was always a rubber from four to seven. He cut in: he took his seat: he took up the cards to deal.

"I have seen a ghost," he said. "The ghost of a face—I saw it in a carriage driving along the Marina—clubs, Queen."

He dined at the club that evening. After dinner he sent for the List of Residents, and also for that of Visitors.

"It was Clarinda," he said. "I knew it was Clarinda. I should know her anywhere. But what is her name?" He looked through the list. He found her old name—one of the tenants in a certain square. "Why—" He looked up in surprise—"She has never changed her name! How about the coronet, then? I knew it was Clarinda. Never married, and with all that money! Would she be contented, then, with nothing less than a Duke?"

He was disturbed all the evening with thoughts of the past. When a man is wholly absorbed with his work he has no time to think of the past. An Anglo-Indian's work is more exacting and absorbing than any other kind of work. All the way along the road to promotion, as this servant of India drew nearer to the administration of a Province, about as great as France, his work wholly absorbed him. He never wanted to go home: he remained in perfect health: he lost thought of his boyhood: his home, his memories, his associations, were all in India. After forty years the memory of the past came back to him. "Her father must be dead," he said. "I remember hearing, I forgot when, that he was dead. And Clarinda has never married. Strange!"

In the night he awoke with the recollection of a certain farewell pledge made in the galleries of the Great Exhibition of '51.

"And I promised that she should be the first person I would call upon. And I have been here three months and never once thought of her. I wonder if she remembers me?"

III.

Next day he called. Clarinda lived in a great house. She was rich then—but that, of course: was not her father a Nabob? Sir George smiled, thinking how very, very different was the Anglo-Indian now.

Clarinda was alone. She received his card with a pretty blush. "He has remembered me, then," she said. Her face, save for the setting of white hair instead of the old light-brown locks, was almost unchanged. A little heightening of the cheek-bones, a little more prominence to the features; but the eyes were the same, and the face preserved the ancient sweetness and delicacy as befits one who has lived in sweet fancies and noble thought and maiden meditation, untouched by the rudeness and the coarseness of the world. She rose; she held out her hand; she looked at her old friend curiously.

"George!" she said. "You have grown. You are so much—larger—than you were." That was so. The man's head was a great deal bigger than the boy's, it wanted room for all the work he had done; his shoulders were broader—to bear the weight. "And you have the look of authority," she added.

"And you, Clarinda? You are almost unchanged. I saw you driving yesterday. I knew you instantly. Almost unchanged," he added. "Yet it is so long ago. My life is almost spent, and my work is done—since last we met. It is forty years ago."

"We are old, George. Sit down. Tell me about yourself. Are you married?"

"I have been too busy to think of such a thing. But I was surprised—I confess—I thought of you as of some great lady—"

"It was my father's dream—but never mine. He died not long after you went away. Since then I have lived a quiet life, which pleases me best."

They talked all the afternoon. Sir George went away at six, but returned at half-past seven—and dined with Clarinda.

"You are never lonely?" he asked.

"Never. In the summer I am at home—in the old village. There is so much to do, and so many people to think about, that I have no time to be lonely. Besides, I have so many friends—first cousins and second cousins and other friends—young people who come to stay with me and—and engage me with their affairs and their troubles. Oh! there is no time, I assure you, for feeling lonely. In the winter I come here. The house is almost always full."

"You have spent your life in looking after an ungrateful village, and in helping girls, who don't thank you, I believe, over their troubles. Well—" He could not at the moment complete his sentence.

"And you, George? You have spent your life in working for an ungrateful country, and in helping people through famines and plagues and bad harvests, and I am sure they don't thank you at all." The retort was quite spirited.

"Humph! Well—the case is not quite the same. A man has got his work to do, and he must do it. As for gratitude, we hardly expect a Bengalee's thanks for pulling him through a famine, do we? And you may say what you will, Clarinda. It is quite clear to me that you have spent an unselfish life, and that you have given yourself up to other people."

She laughed. "Oh! George—the unselfish life, indeed! Why, you foolish boy"—thus they fell back into the old talk—"I have led the most selfish life in the world. Don't you understand that I like to see people happy?"

"You always did, Clarinda. You used to like making me happy. Don't you remember how I used to inflict all my troubles upon you? And how we talked about India? I believe it was you who stimulated your father to get me my nomination—always the same." His eyes softened. "Always the same. You are not changed a bit." He stooped and kissed her fingers. It is an action of admiration and of worship. Clarinda blushed most sweetly. "And I am more pleased—more grateful, Clarinda—than I can express to have found you at last, and to have found you the same as you used to be."

The next day he called again. He had an excellent excuse: he brought with him a box of Indian curios—things he had collected—and presented them to his old friend. Again he stayed all the afternoon, and again he dined with Clarinda.

* * * * *

"Where is Sir George?" asked one at the whist-table.

"Gone to look after his ghost of a face. I saw him knocking at a door in Warrior Square."

* * * * *

It takes very little time to acquire a new habit, even at the age of—well—after forty years' service. Besides, when it is merely to resume an old habit—

Sir George found himself in the society of his old friend every day, and nearly all day long. The house presently began to fill up with young people, especially in the Christmas holidays. The young people quickly understood that Sir George belonged to the house. Nothing was changed outwardly. Clarinda was as full of sympathy for them all as ever: as sweet and as gracious and as wise. They worshipped the best woman in the world just as much as ever: but there was something more. They saw the softening of the eyes when they rested on the tall frame and the white beard of the big Indian: they saw the little flush of her cheek when this companion of her youth came into the room: they watched how she looked upon him when he went away. Others, more audacious, watched the man. The house was full of girls—young and as lovely as Aurora, some of them: clever, with the learning of Girton and the wit of Newnham, some of them. This man, whom it was a distinction even to know, paid no kind of attention to any of them: there was only one woman present, as far as he was concerned. And to her he was full of attentions—the little attentions so natural, so spontaneous, that prove in younger people the domination of Love. What did it prove in this elderly guest—the man of forty years' service?

The Christmas holidays were over: the girls had all gone away again: gone back to their work in this woeful world, where all the girls have now to endure the curse of labour in addition to other burdens laid upon them. Clarinda was left alone. But George came every day. And every morning they walked together on the Marina: and every afternoon they drove together: and most days they dined together.

One day, after a quarter of an hour of silence, during which Sir George had been walking about the drawing-room looking absently into cabinets and at pictures, he suddenly stopped, and, with a very red face, he spoke.

"Clarinda, my Indian things would look much better in your cabinets than the rubbish you've got there."

"Do you think so, George?"

"And my books would look very well in your library, which wants more books."

"Do you think so, George?"

"And, Clarinda, whenever I take my hat off the peg, I think to myself: 'What a pity it can't hang there always!'"

* * * * *

When the girls came again, there was no change to speak of. Only Sir George was at breakfast as well as at lunch and dinner: and he was even more attentive to Clarinda than before. So that, after all, the *petits soins* may mean love even to a man who has had forty years' service; and this veracious example ought to make old people happy, by showing that love is not always the gift of the young, as they would have us believe; and that October—nay, even November—may be, after all, a warm and sunny month.



Wiosummer Fires.

by "Q"

ILLUSTRATED BY WAL PAGET.

IN the course of an eventful life John Penaluna did three very rash things. To begin with, at seventeen he ran away to sea.

He had asked his father's permission. But for fifty years the small estate had been going from bad to worse. John's grandfather in the piping days of agriculture had drunk the profits and mortgaged everything but the furniture. On his death, John's father (who had enlisted in a line regiment) came home with a broken kneepan and a motherless boy, and turned market-gardener in a desperate attempt to rally the family fortune. With capital he might have succeeded. But market-gardening required labour; and he could neither afford to hire it nor to spare the services of a growing lad who cost nothing but his keep. So John's request was not granted.

A week later—in the twilight of a May evening—John was digging potatoes on the slope above the harbour, when he heard—away up the first bend of the river—the crew of the *Hannah Hands* brigantine singing as they weighed anchor. He listened for a minute, stuck his visgy* into the soil, slipped on his coat, and trudged down to the ferry-slip.

Two years passed without word of him. Then on a blue and sunny day in October he emerged out of Atlantic fogs upon the Market Strand at Falmouth: a strapping fellow with a brown and somewhat heavy face, silver rings in his ears, and a suit of good sea-cloth on his back. He travelled by van to Truro, and thence by coach to St. Austell. It was Friday—market day; and in the market he found his father standing sentry, upright as his lame leg allowed, grasping a specimen apple-tree in either hand. John stepped up to him, took one of the apple-trees, and stood sentry beside him. Nothing was said—not a word until John found himself in the ramshackle market-cart, jogging homewards. His father held the reins.

"How's things at home?" John asked.

"Much as ever. Hester looks after me."

Hester was John's cousin, the only child of old Penaluna's only sister, and lately an orphan. John had never seen her.

"If I was you," said he, "I'd have a try with borrowed capital. You could raise a few hundreds easy. You'll never do anything as you're going."

"If I was you," answered his father, "I'd keep my opinions till they were asked for."

And so John did, for three years; in the course of which it is to be supposed he forgot them. When the old man died he inherited everything; including the debts, of course. "He knows what I would have him do by Hester," said the will. It went on: "Also I will not be buried in consecrated

ground, but at the foot of the dufflin apple-tree in the waste-piece under King's Walk, and the plainer the better. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, amen. P.S.—John knows the tree."

But since by an oversight the will was not read until after the funeral, this wish could not be carried out. John resolved to attend to the other all the more scrupulously; and went straight from the lawyer to the kitchen, where Hester stood by the window scouring a copper pan.

"Look here," he said, "the old man hasn't left you nothing."

"No?" said Hester. "Well, I didn't expect anything." And she went on with her scouring.

"But he's a-left a pretty plain hint o' what he wants me to do."

He hesitated, searching the calm profile of her face. Hester's face was always calm, but her eyes sometimes terrified him. Everyone allowed she had wonderful eyes, though no two people agreed about their colour. As a matter of fact their colour was that of the sea, and varied with the sea. And all her life through they were searching, quietly, unceasingly searching, for she knew



"Look here," he said, "the old man hasn't left you nothing."

not what—something she never had found, never would find. At times, when talking with you, she would break off as though words were of no use to her, and her eyes had to seek your soul on their own account. And in those silences your soul had to render up the truth to her, though it could never be the truth she sought. When at length her gaze relaxed and she remembered and begged pardon (perhaps with a deprecatory laugh), you sighed; but whether on her account or yours it was impossible to say.

John looked at her awkwardly, and drummed with one foot on the limeash floor.

"He wanted you to marry me," he blurted out. "I—I reckon I've wanted that, too . . . oh, yes, for a long time!"

She put both hands behind her—one of them still grasped the polishing-cloth—came over, and gazed long into his face.

"You mean it," she said at length. "You are a good man. I like you. I suppose I must."

She turned—still with her hands behind her—walked to the window, and stood pondering the harbour and the vessels at anchor and the rooks flying westward. John would have followed and kissed her, but divined that she wished nothing so little. So he backed towards the door, and said—

"There's nothing to wait for. 'Twouldn't do to be married from the same house, I expect. I was thinking—any time that's agreeable—if you was to lodge across the harbour for awhile, with the Mayows—Cherry Mayow's a friend of yours—we could put up the banns and all shipshape."

He found himself outside the door, mopping his forehead.

This was the second rash thing that John Penaluna did.

II.

It was Midsummer Eve, and a Saturday, when Hester knocked at the Mayows' green door on the Town Quay. The Mayows' house hung over the tideway, and the *Touch-me-not* schooner, home that day from Florida with a cargo of pines, and warped alongside the quay, had her foreyard braced aslant to avoid knocking a hole in the Mayows' roof.

A Cheap Jack's caravan stood at the edge of the quay. The Cheap Jack was feasting inside on fried ham rasher among his clocks and mirrors and pewter ware; and though it wanted an hour of dusk, his assistant was already lighting the naphtha lamps when Hester passed.

Steam issued from the Mayows' doorway, which had a board across it to keep the younger Mayows from straggling. A voice from the steam invited her to come in. She climbed over the board, groped along the dusky passage, pushed open a door and looked in on the kitchen, where, amid clouds of vapour, Mrs. Mayow and her daughter Cherry were washing the children. Each had a tub and a child in it; and three children, already washed, skipped around the floor stark naked, one with a long churchwarden pipe blowing bubbles which the other two pursued. In the far corner, behind a deal table, sat Mr. Mayow, and patiently tuned a fiddle—a quite hopeless task in that atmosphere.

"My gracious!" Mrs. Mayow exclaimed, rising from her knees; "if it isn't Hester already! Amelia, get out and dry yourself while I make a cup of tea."

Hester took a step forward, but paused at a sound of dismal bumping on the staircase leading up from the passage.

"That's Elizabeth Ann," said Mrs. Mayow composedly, "or Heber, or both. We shall know when they get to the bottom. My dear, you must be perishing for a cup of tea. Oh, it's Elizabeth Ann! Cherry, go and smack her, and tell her what I'll do if she falls downstairs again. It's all Matthew Henry's fault." Here she turned on the naked urchin with the churchwarden pipe. "If he'd only been home to his time—"

"I was listening to Zeke Penhaligon," said Matthew Henry (aged eight). "He's home to-day in the *Touch-me-not*."

"He's no good to King nor country," said Mrs. Mayow.

"He was telling me about a man that got swallowed by a whale—"

"Go away with your Jonahses!" sneered one of his sisters.

"It wasn't Jonah. This man's name was Jones—*Captain* Jones, from Dundee. A whale swallowed him; but, as it happened, the whale had swallowed a cask just before, and the cask stuck in its stomach. So whatever the whale swallowed after that went into the cask, and did the whale no good. But Captain Jones had plenty to eat till he cut his way out with a clasp-knife—"

"How could he?"

"That's all you know. Zeke says he did. A whale always turns that way up when he's dying. So Captain Jones cut his way into daylight, when, what does he see but a sail, not a mile away! He fell on his knees—"

"How could he, you silly? He'd have slipped."

But at this point Cherry swept the family off to bed. Mrs. Mayow, putting forth unexpected strength, carried the tubs out to the back-yard, and poured the soapy water into the harbour. Hester, having borrowed a touzer,* tucked up her sleeves and fell to tidying the kitchen. Mr. Mayow went on tuning his fiddle. It was against his principles to work on a Saturday night.

"Your wife seems very strong," observed Hester, with a shade of reproach in her voice.

"Strong as a horse," he assented cheerfully. "I call it wonnerful after what she've a-gone through. 'Twouldn't surprise me, one o' these days, to hear she'd

taken up a tub with the cheeld in it, and heaved cheeld and all over the quay-door. She's terrible absent in her mind."

Mrs. Mayow came panting back with a kettleful of water, which she set to boil; and, Cherry now reappearing with the report that all the children were safe abed, the three women sat around the fire awaiting their supper, and listening to the voice of the Cheap Jack without.

"We'll step out and have a look at him by and by," said Cherry.

"For my part," Mrs. Mayow murmured, with her eyes on the fire, "I never hear one of those fellers without wishing I had a million of money. There's so many little shiny pots and pans you could go on buying for ever and ever, just like Heaven!"

She sighed as she poured the boiling water into the teapot. On Saturday nights, when the children were packed off, a deep peace always fell upon Mrs. Mayow, and she sighed until bed-time, building castles in the air.

Their supper finished, the two girls left her to her musings and stepped out to see the fun. The naphtha-lamps flared in Hester's face, and for a minute red wheels danced before her eyes, the din of a gong battered on her ears, and vision and hearing were indistinguishably blurred. A plank, like a diving-board, had been run out on trestles in front of the caravan, and along this the assistant darted forwards and backwards on a level with the shoulders of the good-humoured crowd, his arms full of clocks, saucepans, china ornaments, mirrors, feather brushes, teapots, sham jewellery. Sometimes he made pretence to slip, recovered himself with a grin on the very point of scattering his precious armfuls; and always when he did this the crowd laughed uproariously. And all the while the Cheap Jack shouted or beat his gong. Hester thought at first there were half-a-dozen Cheap Jacks at least—he made such a noise, and the mirrors around his glittering platform flashed forth so many reflections of him. Trade was always brisk on Saturday night, and he might have kept the auction going until eleven had he been minded. But he had come to stay for a fortnight (much to the disgust of credit-giving tradesmen), and cultivated eccentricity as a part of his charm. In the thickest of the bidding he suddenly closed his sale.

"I've a weak chest," he roared. "Even to make your fortunes—which is my constant joy and endeavour, as you know—I mustn't expose it too much to the night air. Now I've a pianner here, but it's not for sale. And I've an assistant here—a bit worn, but he's not for sale neither. I got him for nothing, to start with—from the work'us" (comic protest here from the assistant, and roars of laughter from the crowd)—"and I taught him a lot o' things, and among 'em to play the pianner. So as 'tis Midsummer's Eve, and I see some very nice-lookin' young women a tip-tapping their feet for it, and Mr. Mayow no further away than next door, and able to play the fiddle to the life—what I say is, ladies and gentlemen, let's light up a fire and see if, with all their reading and writing, the young folks have forgot how to dance!"

In the hubbub that followed, Cherry caught Hester by the arm and whispered—

"Why, I clean forgot was Midsummer Eve! We'll try our fortun's afterwards. Aw, no need to look puzzled—I'll show 'ec. Here, feyther, feyther! . . ." Cherry ran down the passage and returned, haling forth Mr. Mayow with his fiddle.

And then—as it seemed to Hester, in less than a minute—empty packing-cases came flying from half-a-dozen doors—from the cooper's, the grocer's, the ship-chandler's, the china-shop, the fruit-shop, the "ready-made outfitter's," and the Cheap Jack's caravan—were seized upon, broken up, the splinters piled in a heap, anointed with naphtha, and ignited, almost before Mr. Mayow had time to mount an empty barrel, tune his "A" string by the piano, and dash into the opening bars of the Furry Dance. And almost before she knew it, Hester's hands were caught, and she found herself one of the ring swaying and leaping round the blaze. Cherry held her left hand and an old waterman her right. The swing of the crowd carried her off her feet, and she had to leap with the best. By and by, as her feet fell into time with the measure, she really began to enjoy it all—the music, the rush of the cool night air against her temples, even the smell of naphtha and the heat of the flames on her face as the dancers paused now and again, dashed upon the fire as if to tread it out, and backed until the strain on their arms grew tense again; and, just as it grew unbearable, the circular leaping was renewed. Always in these pauses the same face confronted her across the fire: the face of a young man in a blue jersey and a peaked cap, a young man with crisp dark hair and dark eyes, gay and challenging. In her daze it seemed to Hester that, when they came face to face, he was always on the side of the bonfire nearest the water; and the moon rose above the farther hill as they danced, and swam over his shoulder, at each meeting higher and higher.

It was all new to her and strange. The music ceased abruptly, the dancers unclasped their hands and fell apart, laughing and panting. And then, while yet she leaned against the Mayows' doorpost, the fiddle broke out again—broke into a polka tune; and there, in front of her stood the young man in the blue jersey and peaked cap.

He was speaking. She scarcely knew what she answered; but, even while she wondered, she had taken his arm submissively. And, next, his arm was about her and she was dancing. She had never danced before; but, after one or two broken paces, her will surrendered to his, her body and its movements ansed him docilely. She felt that his eyes were on her, but dared not look up. She saw nothing of the crowd. Other dancers passed and repassed like phantoms, neither jostling nor even touching—so well her partner steered. She grew giddy, her

* *Tout-servé*, apron.

breath came short and fast. She would have begged for a rest, but the sense of his mastery weighed on her, held her dumb. Suddenly he laughed close to her ear, and his breath ruffled her hair.

"You dance fine," he said. "Shall us cross the fire?"

She did not understand. In her giddiness they seemed to be moving in a wide, empty space among many fires, nor had she an idea which was the real one. His arm tightened about her.

"Now!" he whispered. With a leap they whirled high and across the bonfire. Her feet had scarcely touched ground before they were off again to the music—or would have been; but, to her immense surprise, her partner had dropped on his knees before her and was clasping her about the ankles. She heard a shout. The fire had caught the edge of her skirt and her frock was burning.

It was over in a moment. His arms had stifled, extinguished the flame before she knew of her danger. Still kneeling, holding her fast, he looked up, and their eyes met. "Take me back," she murmured, swaying. He rose, took her arm, and she found herself in the Mayows' doorway with Cherry at her side. "Get away with you," said Cherry, "and leave her to me!" And the young man went.

Cherry fell to examining the damaged skirt. "It's clean ruined," she reported; "but I reckon that don't matter to a bride. John Penaluna'll not be grudging the outfit. I must say, though—you quiet ones!"

"What have I done?"

"Done? Well, that's good. Only danced across the bonfire with young Zeke Penhaligon. Why, mother can mind when that was every bit so good as a marriage before parson and clerk!—and not so long ago neither."

III.

"You go upstairs backwards," said Cherry an hour later. "It don't matter our going together, only you mustn't speak a word for ever so. You undress in the dark, and turn each thing inside out as you take it off. Prayers? Yes, you can say your prayers if you like; but to yourself, mind. 'Twould be best to say 'em backwards, I reckon; but I never heard no instructions about prayers."

"And then?"

"Why, then you go to sleep and dream of your sweetheart."

"Oh! is that all?"

"Plenty enough, *I* should think! I dessay it don't mean much to you; but it means a lot to me, who han't got a sweetheart yet an' don't know if ever I shall have one."

So the two girls solemnly mounted the stairs backwards, undressed in the dark, and crept into bed. But Hester could not sleep. She lay for an hour quite silent, motionless lest she should awake Cherry, with eyes wide open, staring at a ray of moonlight on the ceiling, and from that to the dimity window-curtains and the blind which waved ever so gently in the night breeze. All the while she was thinking of the dance; and by and by she sighed.

"Bain't you asleep?" asked Cherry.

"No."

"Nor I. Can't sleep a wink. It's they children overhead: they'm up to some devilment, I know, because Matthew Henry isn't snoring. He always snores when he's asleep, and it shakes the house. I'll ha' gone to see, only I was afraid to disturb 'ee. I'll war'n' they'm up to some maygames on the roof."

"Let me come with you," said Hester.

They rose. Hester slipped on her dressing-gown and Cherry an old macintosh, and they stole up the creaking stairs.

"Oh, you anointed limbs!" exclaimed Cherry, coming to a halt on the top.

The door of the children's garret stood ajar. On the landing outside a short ladder led up to a trap-door in the eaves, and through the open trap-way a broad ray of moonlight streamed upon the staircase.

"That's mother again! Now I know where Amelia got that cold in her head. I'll war'n' the door hasn't been locked since Tuesday!"

She climbed the ladder, with Hester at her heels. They emerged through the trap upon a flat roof, where on Mondays Mrs. Mayow spread her family "wash" to dry in the harbour breezes. Was that a part of the "wash" now hanging in a row along the parapet?

No; those dusky white objects were the younger members of the Mayow family leaning over the tide-way, each with a stick and line, fishing—for conger, Matthew Henry explained as Cherry took him by the ear; but Elizabeth Jane declared that, after four nights of it, she, for her part, limited her hopes to shannies.

Cherry swept them together, and filed them in through the trap in righteous wrath, taking her opportunity to box the ears of each. "Come'st along, Hester."

Hester was preparing to follow, when she heard a subdued laugh. It seemed to come from the far side of the parapet, and below her. She drew her dressing-gown close about her and leaned over.

She looked down upon a stout spar overhanging the tide, and thence along a vessel's deck, empty, glimmering in the moonlight; upon mysterious coils of rope; upon the dew-wet roof of a deck-house; upon a wheel twinkling with brass-work, and behind it a white-painted taffrail. Her eyes

were travelling forward to the bowsprit again, when, close by the foremast, they were arrested, and she caught her breath sharply.

There, with his naked feet on the bulwarks and one hand against the house-wall, in the shadow of which he leaned out-board, stood a man. His other hand grasped a short stick; and with it he was reaching up to the window above him—her bed-room window. The window, she remembered, was open at the bottom—an inch or two, no more. The man slipped the end of his stick under the sash and prised it up quietly. Next he raised himself on tip-toe, and thrust the stick a foot or so through the opening; worked it slowly along the window-ledge, and hesitated; then pulled with a light jerk, as an angler strikes a fish. And Hester, holding her breath, saw the stick withdrawn, inch by inch; and at the end of it a garment—her petticoat!

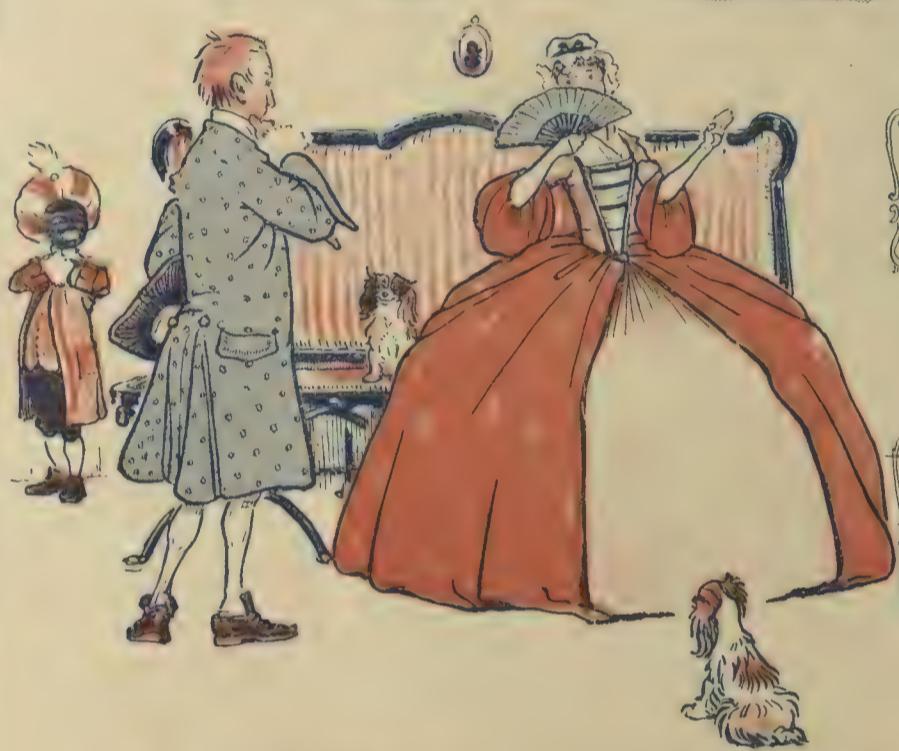
(Continued on page 22.)



"Do you know what it means, to kiss over running water?" His lips whispered it close to her ear.



A BALLAD



FROM LINCOLN TO LONDON RODE FORTH OUR YOUNG SQUIRE; TO BRING DOWN A WIFE WHOM THE SWAINS MIGHT ADMIRE; BUT IN SPITE OF WHATEVER THE MORTAL COULD SAY, THE GODDESS OBJECTED THE LENGTH OF THE WAY.

TO GIVE UP THE OP'RA, THE PARK AND THE BALL, FOR TO VIEW THE STAG HORMS IN AN OLD COUNTRY HALL; TO HAVE NEITHER CHINA NOR INDIA TO SEE — NOR A LACEMAN TO PLAGUE IN THE MORNING — NOT SHE!



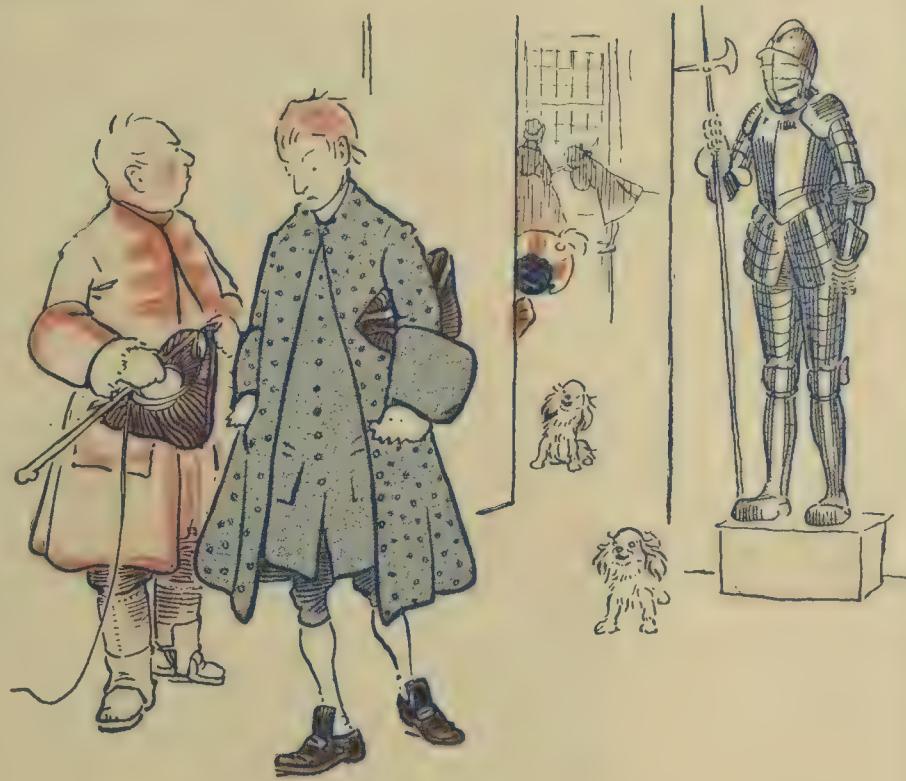


BY SHENSTONE

TO FORSAKE THE DEAR PLAYHOUSE,
QUIN, GARRICK, AND CLIVE,
WHO BY DINT OF MERE HUMOUR
HAD KEPT HER ALIVE; ~
TO FOREGO THE FULL BOX FOR
HIS LONESOME ABODE.
O HEAVENS! SHE SHOULD FAINT,
SHE SHOULD DIE ON THE ROAD.

TO BE SURE SHE COULD BREATHE
NOWHERE ELSE THAN IN TOWN
THUS SHE TALK'D LIKE A WIT,
AND HE LOOK'D LIKE A CLOWN;
BUT THE WHILE HONEST HARRY
DESPAIR'D TO SUCCEED,
A COACH WITH A CORONET
TRAIL'D HER TO TWEED.

CECIL ALDIN



"How dare you!"

The thief whipped himself about, jumped back upon deck, and stood smiling up at her, with the petticoat in his hand. It was the young sailor she had danced with.

"How dare you? Oh, I'd be ashamed!"

"Midsummer Eve!" said he, and laughed.

"Give it up at once!" She dared not speak loudly, but felt herself trembling with wrath.

"That's not likely." He unhitched it from the fish-hook he had spliced to the end of his stick. "And after the trouble I've taken!"

"I'll call your captain, and he'll make you give it up."

"The old man's sleeping ashore, and won't be down till nine in the morning. I'm alone here." He stepped to the fore-halliards. "Now I'll just hoist this up to the topmast head, and you'll see what a pretty flag it makes in the morning."

"Oh, please . . .!"

He turned his back and began to bend the petticoat on the halliards.

"No, no . . . please . . . it's cruel!"

He could hear that she was crying softly; hesitated, and faced round again.

"There now . . . if it teases you so. There wasn't no harm meant. You shall have it back—wait a moment!"

He came forward and clambered out on the bowsprit, and from the bowsprit to the jib-boom beneath her. She was horribly afraid he would fall, and broke off her thanks to whisper him to be careful, at which he laughed. Standing there, and holding by the fore-topmast stay, he could just reach a hand up to the parapet, and was lifting it, but paused.

"No," said he, "I must have a kiss in exchange."

"Please don't talk like that. I thank you so much. Don't spoil your kindness."

"You've spoilt my joke. See, I can hoist myself on the stay here. Bend over as far as you can. I swear you shall have the petticoat at once, but I won't give it up without."

"I can't. I shall never think well of you again."

"Oh, yes, you will. Bend lower."

"Don't!" she murmured, but had no strength to disobey. The moonlight, refracted from the water below, glimmered on her face as she leaned towards him.

"Lower. What queer eyes you've got! Do you know what it means, to kiss over running water?" His lips whispered it close to her ear. And with that, as she bent, some treacherous pin gave way, and her loosely knotted hair fell in dark masses across his face. She heard him laugh as he kissed her in the tangled screen of it.

The next moment she had snatched the bundle and sprung to her feet and away. But as she passed by the trap-door and hurriedly re-twisted her hair before descending, she heard him there, beyond the parapet, laughing still.

IV.

Three weeks later she married John Penaluna. They spent their honeymoon at home, as sober folks did in those days. John could spare no time for holiday-making. He had entered on his duties as master of Hall, and set with vigour about improving his inheritance. His first step was to clear the long cliff-garden, which had been allowed to drop out of cultivation from the day when he had cast down his mattock there and run away to sea. It was a mere wilderness now. But he fell to work like a navvy.

He fought it single-handed. He had no money to hire extra labour, and apparently had lost his old belief in borrowed capital, or perhaps had grown timid with home-keeping. A single labourer—his father's old hind—managed the cows and the small farmstead. Hester superintended the dairy and the housework, with one small servant-maid at her beck and call. And John tackled the gardens, hiring a boy or two in the fruit-picking season, or to carry water in times of drought. So they lived for two years tranquilly. As for happiness—well, happiness depends on what you expect. It was difficult to know how much John Penaluna (never a demonstrative man) had expected.

As far as folks could judge, John and Hester were happy enough. Day after day, from sunrise to sunset, he fought with Nature in his small wilderness, and slowly won—heaving, digging, terracing, cultivating, reclaiming plot after plot, and adding it to his conquests. The slope was sunny, but waterless, and within a year Hester could see that his whole frame stooped with the constant rolling of barrels and carriage of buckets and waterpots up and down the weary incline. It seemed to her that the hill thirsted continually; that no sooner was its thirst slaked than the weeds and brambles took fresh strength and must be driven back with hook and hoe. A small wooden summer-house stood in the upper angle of the cliff-garden. John's father had set it there twenty years before, and given it glazed windows; for it looked down towards the harbour's mouth and the open sea beyond. Before his death the brambles grew close about it, and level with the roof, choking the path to it and the view from it. John had spent the best part of a fortnight in clearing the ground and opening up the view again. And here, when her housework was over, Hester usually sat on warm afternoons with her knitting. She could hear her husband at work on the terraces below; the sound of his pick and mattock mingled with the clank of windlasses or the tick-tack of shipwrights' mallets, as she knitted and watched the smoke of the little town across the water, the knots of idlers on the quay, the children, like emmets, tumbling in and out of the Mayows' doorway, the ships passing out to sea, or entering the harbour and coming to their anchorage.

One afternoon in midsummer week John climbed to his wife's summer-house with a big cabbage-leaf in his hand, and within the cabbage-leaf a dozen strawberries. (A year or two later John's strawberries were known for the finest in the neighbourhood; and if you had called them the finest in the world, no one in the neighbourhood would have disputed it. But I am talking of early days, when their fame was still to make.) He held his offering in at the open window, and was saying he would step up to the house for a dish of cream; but stopped short.

"Hullo!" said he; for Hester was staring at him rigidly, as white as a ghost. "What's wrong, my dear?" He glanced about him, but saw nothing to account for her pallor—only the scorched hill-side, alive with the noise of grasshoppers, the hot air quivering above the bramble-bushes, and beyond, a line of sunlight across the harbour's mouth, and a schooner with slack canvas crawling to anchor on the flood tide.

"You—you came upon me sudden," she explained.

"Stupid of me!" thought John; and going to the house, fetched not only a dish of cream but the tea-caddy and a kettle, which they put to boil outside the summer-house over a fire of dried brambles. The tea revived Hester and set her tongue going. "Why, 'tis quite a picnic," said John, and told himself privately that it was the happiest hour they had spent together for many a month.

Two evenings later, on his return from St. Austell market, he happened to let himself in by the door of the walled garden just beneath the house, and came on a tall young man talking there in the dusk with his wife.

"Why, 'tis Zeke Penhaligon! How d'ee do, my lad? Now, 'tis queer, but only five minutes agone I was talkin' about 'ee with your skipper, Nummy Tangye, t'other side o' the ferry. He says you're goin' up for your mate's certificate, and ought to get it. Very well he spoke of 'ee. Why don't Hester invite you inside? Come'st long in to supper, my son?"

Zeke followed them in, and this was the first of many visits. John was one of those naturally friendly souls (there are many in the world) who never go forth to seek friends, and to whom few friends ever come, and these by accident. Zeke's talk set his tongue running on his own brief *Wander-jahre*. And Hester would sit and listen to the pair with heightened colour, which made John wonder why, as a rule, she shunned company—it did her so much good. So it grew to be a settled thing that whenever the *Touch-me-not* entered port a knife and fork awaited Zeke up at Hall, and the oftener he came the pleasanter was John's face.

V.

Three years passed, and in the summer of the third year Captain Nummy Tangye, of the *Touch-me-not*, relinquished his command. Captain Tangye's baptismal name was Matthias, and Bideford, in Devon, his native town. But the *Touch-me-not*, which he had commanded for thirty-five years, happened to carry for figurehead a wooden Highlander holding a thistle close to his chest, and against his thigh a scroll with the motto, "Noli Me Tangere," and this being, in popular belief, an effigy of the captain taken in the prime of life, Mr. Tangye cheerfully accepted the fiction with its implication of Scottish descent, and was known at home and in various out-of-the-way parts of the world as Nolim or Nummy. He even carried about a small volume of Burns in his pocket; not from any love of poetry, but to demonstrate, when required, that Scotsmen have their own notions of spelling.

Captain Tangye owned a preponderance of shares in the *Touch-me-not*, and had no difficulty in getting Zeke (who now held a master's certificate) appointed to succeed him. The old man hauled ashore to a cottage with a green door and a brass knocker and a garden high over the water-side. In this he spent the most of his time with a glittering brass telescope of unusual length, and in the intervals of studying the weather and the shipping, watched John Penaluna at work across the harbour.

The *Touch-me-not* made two successful voyages under Zeke's command, and was home again and discharging beside the Town Quay, when, one summer's day, as John Penaluna leaned on his pitchfork beside a heap of weeds arranged for burning, he glanced up and saw Captain Tangye hobbling painfully towards him across the slope. The old man had on his best blue cut-away coat, and paused now and then to wipe his brow.

"I take this as very friendly," said John.

Captain Tangye grunted. "P'rhaps 'tis, p'rhaps 'tisn'. Better wait a bit afore you say it."

"Stay and have a bit of dinner with me and the missus."

"Dashed if I do! 'Tis about her I came to tell 'ee."

"Yes?" John, being puzzled, smiled in a meaningless way.

"Zeke's home agen."

"Yes; he was up here two evenin's ago."

"He was here yesterday; he'll be here again to-day. He comes here too often. I've got a telescope, John Penaluna, and I sees what's goin' on. What's more, I guess what'll come of it. So I warn 'ee—as a friend, of course."

John stared down at the polished steel teeth of his pitchfork, glinting under the noon-day sun.

"As a friend, of course," he echoed vaguely, still with the meaningless smile on his face.

"I b'lieve she means to be a good 'ooman; but she's listenin' to 'en. Now, I've got 'en a ship up to Runcorn. He sha'n't sail the *Touch-me-not* no more. 'Tis

a catch for 'en—a nice barquentine, five hundred tons. If he decides to take the post (and I reckon he will) he starts to-morrow at latest. Between this an' then there's danger, and 'tis for you to settle how to act."

A long pause followed. The clock across the harbour struck noon, and this seemed to wake John Penaluna up. "Thank 'ee," he said. "I think I'll be going in to dinner. I'll—I'll consider of it. You've took me rather sudden."

"Well, so long! I mean it friendly, of course."

"Of course. Better take the lower path; 'tis shorter, an' not so many stones in it."

John stared after him as he picked his way down the hill; then fell to rearranging his heaps of dried rubbish in an aimless manner. He had forgotten the dinner-hour. Something buzzed in his ears. There was no wind on the slope, no sound in the air. The shipwrights had ceased their hammering, and the harbour at his feet lay still as a lake. They were memories, perhaps, that buzzed so swiftly past his ears—trivial recollections by the hundred, all so little, and yet now immensely significant.

"John, John!"

It was Hester, standing at the top of the slope and calling him. He stuck his pitchfork in the ground, picked up his coat, and went slowly in to dinner.

Next day, by all usage, he should have travelled in to market: but he announced at breakfast that he was too busy, and would send Robert, the hind, in his stead. He watched his wife's face as he said it. She certainly changed colour, and yet she did not seem disappointed. The look that sprang into those grey eyes of her was more like one of relief, or, if not of relief, of a sudden hope suddenly snatched at; but this was absurd, of course. It would not fit in with the situation at all.

At dinner he said: "You'll be up in the summer-house this afternoon? I shouldn't wonder if Zeke comes to say good-bye. Tangye says he've got the offer of a new berth, up to Runcorn."

"Yes, I know."

If she wished, or struggled, to say more, he did not seem to observe it, but rose from his chair, stooped and kissed her on the forehead, and resolutely marched out to his garden. He worked that afternoon in a small patch which commanded a view of the ferry and also of the road leading up to Hall: and, at half-past three, or a few minutes later, dropped his spade and strolled down to the edge of his property, a low cliff overhanging the ferry-slip.

"Hullo, Zeke!"

Zeke, as he stepped out of the ferry-boat, looked up with some confusion on his face.

He wore his best suit, with a bunch of sweet-william in his button-hole.

"Come to bid us good-bye, I s'pose. We've heard of your luck. Here, scramble up this way if you can manage, and shake hands on your fortune."

Zeke obeyed. The climb seemed to fluster him; but the afternoon was a hot one in spite of a light westerly breeze. The two men moved side by side across the garden-slope, and as they did so John caught sight of a twinkle of sunshine on Captain Tangye's brass telescope across the harbour.

They paused beside one of the heaps of rubbish. "This is a fine thing for you, Zeke."

"Ay, pretty fair."

"I s'pose we sha'n't be seein' much of you now. 'Tis like an end of old times. I reckoned we'd have a pipe together afore partin'" John pulled out a stumpy clay and filled it. "Got a match about you?"

Zeke passed him one, and he struck it on his boot. "There, now," he went on, "I meant to set a light to these here heaps of rubbish this afternoon, and now I've come out without my matches." He waited for the sulphur to finish bubbling, and then began to puff.

Zeke handed him half-a-dozen matches.

"I dunno how many 'twill take," said John. "S'pose we go round together and light up. 'Twon't take us quarter of an hour, an' we can talk by the way."

Ten minutes later, Captain Tangye, across the harbour, shut his telescope with an angry snap. The smoke of five-and-twenty bonfires crawled up the hillside and completely hid John Penaluna's garden—hid the two figures standing there, hid the little summer-house at the top of the slope. It was enough to make a man swear, and Captain Tangye swore.

John Penaluna drew a long breath.

"Well, good-bye and bless 'ee, Zeke. Hester's up in the summer-house. I won't go up with 'ee; my back's too stiff. Go an' make your adoos to her; she's cleverer than I be, and maybe will tell 'ee what we've both got in our minds."

This was the third rash thing that John Penaluna did.

He watched Zeke up the hill, till the smoke hid him. Then he picked up his spade. "Shall I find her, when I step home this evening? Please God, yes."

And he did. She was there by the supper-table waiting for him. Her eyes were red. John pretended to have dropped something, and went back for a moment to look for it. When he returned, neither spoke.

VI.

Years passed—many years. Their life ran on in its old groove.

John toiled from early morning to sunset, as before—and yet not quite as before. There was a difference, and Captain Tangye would, no doubt, have perceived it long before had not Death one day come on him in an east wind and closed his activities with a snap, much as he had so often closed his telescope.

For a year or two after Zeke's departure, John went on enlarging his garden-bounds, though more languidly. Then followed four or five years during which his conquests seemed to stand still. And then, little by little, the brambles and wild growth rallied. Perhaps—who knows?—the assaulted wilderness had found its Joan of Arc. At any rate, it stood up to him at length, and pressed in upon him, and drove him back. Year by year, on one excuse or another, an outpost, a foot or two, would be abandoned and left to be reclaimed by the weeds. They were the assailants now. And there came a time when they had him at bay, a beaten man, in a patch of not more than fifty square feet, the centre of his former domain. "Time, not Corydon," had conquered him.

He was working here one afternoon when a boy came up the lower path from the ferry, and put a telegram into his hands. He read it over, thought for a while, and turned

to climb the old track towards the summer-house, but brambles choked it completely, and he had to fetch a circuit and strike the grass walk at the head of the slope.

He had not entered the summer-house for years, but he found Hester knitting there as usual, and put the telegram into her hands.

"Zeke is drowned." He paused and added—he could not help it—"You'll not need to be looking out to sea any more."

Hester made as if to answer him, but rose instead and laid a hand on his breast. It was a thin hand, and roughened with housework. With the other she pointed to where the view had lain seaward. He turned. There was no longer any view. The brambles hid it, and must have hidden it for many years.

"Then what have you been thinkin' of all these days?"

Her eyes filled; but she managed to say, "Of you, John."

"It's with you as with me. The weeds have us, every side, each in our corner." He looked at his hands, and with sudden resolution turned and left her.

"Where are you going?"

"To fetch a hook. I'll have that view open again before nightfall, or my name's not John Penaluna."



He found Hester knitting there as usual, and put the telegram into her hands.



AT THE SPRING.



WHILE THE CAT'S AWAY

BY
S. BARING GOULD

ILLUSTRATED BY GUNNING KING.

MRS. LEVERMORE carried her own eggs and butter to market; that is to say, she went to the market town in the carrier's van with her laden baskets on her knees and under the seat, and being a woman of frugal habits, walked home—which saved sixpence—with an empty basket on each arm.

The distance was eight miles; but Mrs. Levermore was a strong and lusty woman in the prime of life, and thought it well worth the sixpence saved to walk eight miles.

She was a woman of florid complexion, comely, plump, and well knit; she had black hair, very smooth, drawn back and plastered with oil that reeked of bergamot. Mrs. Levermore was a widow, and a widow with a daughter aged twenty. Yet she hardly looked it; she did not, assuredly, feel it.

On a certain Saturday evening, after market, in summer, when the silver twilight bathed the landscape, and there was no blackness anywhere, only a pleasing vagueness in outline and mystery in shadow, Mrs. Levermore was walking homewards after having disposed of her eggs and butter at market.

The road was hilly, and she went down the slopes rapidly, but slowly, more slowly than was perhaps consistent, up the hills.

"I think I hear'n," said the widow.

And through the balmy summer night air could be heard the trot of a horse and the rattle of a loose wheel.

Then Mrs. Levermore slowed her pace. Presently she sat down in the hedge.

"The evening be that warm," she said, "and it were a bustle in the market—it takes it out of one, bargaining for an extra penny per pound, that it do."

Such is human nature. It was not the heat, it was not weariness that made Mrs. Levermore delay in the hedge. But most people like to play tricks with and deceive themselves.

"That there 'oss o' Trenneman's walks prodigious slow up the hill," said the widow.

The trot ceased, and now could be heard the pacing of the steed as it mounted the ascent.

Mrs. Levermore waited a few minutes, then took up her baskets, one on each arm, and walked forward, slowly, in the middle of the road.

The horse walked also slowly, the widow slower; consequently, before the top of the hill was reached the beast and the trap it drew had caught up Mrs. Levermore. As she maintained her position in the centre of the road, the driver was obliged to shout, "Hullo, Missus!"

"Dear! dear! dear!" exclaimed the widow. "Is that you, Mr. Trenneman? Bless my life! I was that wrapped up in my reckonings of the butter and eggs that I didn't hear you. And I'm a bit tired, I be; the evening is warm."

"Will you have a lift?"

"If not incommoding you."

"Not a bit—there is a place beside me. Put your baskets there, Ma'am. That will do. D'y'e want a hand?"

"Not I, Mr. Trenneman. Not so old as that. I can walk from town, and I hope climb up into a trap unassisted."

So she had a lift.

Was that what she aimed at?

Certainly, a lift; but was that all?

"Well now, Mr. Trenneman," said the widow, "it is very good and kind of you. I was feelin' a bit done. You see, twenty-one eggs to a shilling—well, really, it isn't worth carrying them into market. And the van costs a shilling."

"I am surprised you walk back."

"Well, Mr. Thomas Trenneman; you see sixpence is sixpence, and one may as well save that."

"Yes, but shoe-leather is brown paper, and costs—as if it were leather."

"That is true; but I have my boots from Baker, and I can trust him for real leather. None of your ready-made rubbish!"

"Nevertheless it wears out. And you—you're warm enough to afford a cob and market cart."

"You see, Mr. Thomas, keepin' a cob means havin' a young fellow about, and nowadays young girls are that skittish and unthoughtful that there's no saying but my Rose might take a silly fancy to him, or he become a nuisance by aspiring to her. So, thinking it well over, I considered it best not to have a cob, and so—not a boy about the premises."

"That is like my situation," observed the man Trenneman, a farmer, well-to-do, well built, ripe to richness, and—a widower. "I can't get a proper dairy-maid to do the butter. Since my missus died all has gone to sixes and sevens. There is my young Tom—I want him to better himself, and so I don't like to have a clean, pretty young wench into the farm to make my butter; and I have to engage a middle-aged woman. I'm afraid lest young Tom should get to fancy any dairymaid I had fresh and rosy and pleasant. That would never do."

"I know your butter does not sell well, Thomas. Always a penny a pound less than mine."

"Yes, Mrs. Veale—that's my housekeeper—has a warm hand, and for butter it must be cool."

"That is true, Tom. Now my hand—just you feel it—is cool and sweet. Always is so—and I can make butter like no one else."

"I reckon it is so."

"But a cold hand means a warm heart," said the widow.

"So folks tell; I have never tried," answered Trenneman shortly.

"I hope I'm not incommoding you," said the widow.

"Not at all. But you're ray-ther close."

"It is the bar of the side cuts me," complained Mrs. Levermore. "But I'm terrible sorry."

Then ensued a little pause. The hill had been surmounted; now the horse was trotting down hill.

"How about your eggs?" asked the widow.

"There, now, is another trouble," said the widower. "Mrs. Veale don't properly understand poultry. 'The hens lay about in all the most unlikely places, and she don't find them till there's chickens inside, and then at market folk won't buy my eggs; they say there is no trusting them. It is as bad with my spring chicken. Mrs. Veale says there's something in the ground or they have been overlooked [bewitched]. 'They died off fast with pip and gapes in the spring, and I have not made the cost of their meals in pullets taken to market."

"You see, my dear Tom, it ain't her own as she cares for. She does her business anyhow, and takes no proper interest in it. It is a very different thing with a woman who owns poultry to one who is hired to look after another man's fowls."

"That may be so."

"It is so. Now look at me. I've nigh made my rent on my eggs and spring

"And then, Tom dear, I doubt but Mrs. Veale has a liquorish eye on you."

"Perhaps so; but *she* won't catch me."

"That's right. But people do and will talk. You can't prevent them. And it is unpleasant. Get a suitable wife, and then Mrs. Veale and dairymaids and all the whole pass'l o' womenkind servants can't worrit you no more. Your wife will mind them while you're mindin' the cattle."

"Mrs. Levermore," said the farmer, dropping into a confidential tone, "you've only spoken out what lay in my mind, and have given voice to common-sense."

"So you don't take it amiss?"

"I take it kindly, and I intend to act on your advice."

"You do?"

"Yes—and would you mind easin' off a bit, you nips my side so tight I can't



Before the top of the hill was reached, the trap had caught up Mrs. Levermore.

chicken: mine thrive, why not yours? My butter sells at once, and for a better price than any in the market. For why? Because it is my own."

"But there are others in the market who sell their own poultry."

"Yes. But then, you see, there are women and women. Some knows the ways of layin' hens, and others never learn. Some have hot hands, and they'll never make butter; and some have hands always fresh and cool—but warm hearts."

"You think so?"

"I'm sure certain. I will tell you what it is. We are old friends; have always been neighbours, and never had a cross word the one from the other, but a helpin' hand when needed. You won't mind my speakin' and givin' a word of counsel; but I do think, dear Tom, as it is high time for you to be lookin' out for a new missus. Bless her soul! I did love your late one, and I was at the layin' out, and it was beautiful. But as Scriptur' saith, 'Don't be weighed down wi' overmuch sorrow.' It ain't good for a man—and especially a farmer—to be alone."

"I won't say you are not right."

well work my arm and the reins? Yes, I do; and what is more I cannot take a missus without your consent."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; I looks to you to speak the word as will make me a happy man, and my fowls lay proper, and butter sell a penny a pound dearer."

"Oh, Tom! dearest Tom, you *know* you can rely on me. I will readily agree to anything you ask."

"I can count on your promise?"

"Certain."

"Then I'll take Rose, your daughter."

Mrs. Levermore moved in her seat away from the farmer. She did not speak for a while. When she did, it was in a constrained tone. "Ain't there a terrible disparity in ages, dear?"

"Oh, that don't matter. It is always well to have a husband ray-ther older than the wife, then she looks up to him."

"But the disparity is so great. You are older than I am."

"Well, what of that? I'm fresh and hale, and have not a grey hair in my head. Bless me! I'm in my prime."

"Why—your son is one-and-twenty."

"I married early. Beside—your Rose has a little money, some few hundreds left by her father."

"Only a very few hundreds, hardly worth mentioning."

"Well, well, I am a warm man. It were a pity if those hundreds were lost."

"Why should they be lost?"

"I mean—if they did not get into my hands."

The widow sat glum, and looked before her at the ears of the horse.

"Now, Mrs. Levermore," pursued the farmer, "I don't want the happiness to be all on one side."

"I don't think it would be all on one side," retorted the widow sharply. "A young chit of an unfledged hussy like Rose may not be so supremely happy in having an old man—"

"I did not mean that, Mrs. Levermore," said the farmer.

"Then what did you mean, pray, Mr. Treneman?"

"I meant that you have not heard me out. My boy, young Tom, comes in for his mother's money, a few hundreds, and I shouldn't like him to throw it away by marrying a giddy gal, a young thing as don't know the vally of money, and dresses herself like a peacock, and plays the pianner, and speaks parley-voo. I want to settle him with a sensible woman, as can look after his clothes and poultry and butter, and make him generally content and happy in that callin' of life in which it has pleased Providence to place him. And—I have thought, what do *you* say to taking young Tom? That is, if the disparity be not too great."

"Oh, disparity," said the widow depreciatingly. "I don't call that disparity, for it is always wise and reasonable that a young man should take a wife a little doity mite older than himself; then she keeps him steady, and is the making of him."

"Yes, but consider, your daughter Rose is twenty."

"I married cruel young, too young, a thousand times too young," explained Mrs. Levermore. "See, I haven't turned a hair, and I thinks nothing of walking from market, and trip it like a girl."

"Very well, it's agreed, is it?"

"Certainly; you take Rose."

"And you young Tom."

"But," said Mrs. Levermore, "can you answer for him?"

"Of course I can. Butter don't melt in his mouth. My will is his will. As to Rose, I don't ax. Of course, she'll appreciate the honour."

* * * * *

And now, whilst the parents are jogging from market, let us look at the little farm of Widow Levermore and her Rose, who was left behind.

The weather had been warm, and for some reason unaccountable to dairy-women, the butter had refused to be made on the morning of market-day.

Before leaving for town in the carrier's van, Mrs. Levermore had told her daughter to wait till evening and see if conditions were altered, when, the second milking over, she was to proceed to make the butter.

A West Country dairy is something worth seeing. It consists of a long apartment, with a slate floor and a table or shelf of slate slabs running along the walls, supported by built-up stands. The dairy has a north aspect, and it has

but one wide low window filled in with fine wire gauze. The door has also such an opening, filled in the same way, so that a draught constantly breathes through the dairy, and no fly can enter. Cool, sweet, scrupulously clean, and always in artificial twilight, the dairy ever is. On the slate table stand tin pans, scoured till they shine like silver, and in these is the milk in its various stages down to rich clouted cream. To produce this a pan has to be set, containing milk that has stood in the cool for a certain time, over a slow fire in a close range. Formerly the milk was set above charcoal, and in old farm-houses is to be seen in the wall of the kitchen a recess, like a holy-water stoup, in which the charcoal was placed, glowing, and the pan over it. But now the milk-pan is set on the hot plate of a stove, and there it remains till the ring of the pan-bottom repeats itself in the forming richness above. When the dairy-woman sees this circle on the surface, then at once she removes the pan and places it on a cold slab, and allows it to chill. The result is the formation of that unsurpassed product, that concentration of richness, Devonshire cream.

In the West Country there is no churning of butter. All butter is made by hand. The hand is maintained cool in fresh water from the so-called Butter Well, sometimes an old Holy Well turned to such practical purposes; and the cream is stirred with the hand, in one direction, till the butter forms. Then salt is put into it, sometimes a little Turmeric to give it a yellow tinge, but this is not necessary where there are Guernsey cows on the farm yielding milk.

The butter is then put on pure clean cloths, and is kept either in the butter-well on a shelf or in the dairy.

And just as the dairy has an atmosphere of freshness, sweetness, and purity, so is it with the dairymaid. She must be sweet and fresh and clean to scrupulosity, or she very soon ceases to be a dairymaid.

Now towards evening on that same market-day, the wind sprang up and blew from the north-east, and with it the close warm atmosphere dispersed that had hung over the land, and veiled it in an impalpable haze.

At once Rose Levermore knew that the conditions for butter-making were favourable, and she proceeded to the well to fulfil her mother's injunctions.

This well occupied a pretty dip in the hillside, with gnarled and stunted oak above it. The spring was unfailing and ice-cold, but somewhat hard. Her mother never employed it for tea, but declared that it was sovereign for butter. The well was a little building with a roof of slates and an arched doorway. The spring rose bubbling in the floor, and overflowed in a rill under the slab which formed the threshold of the little structure. There was a recess in the wall at the back, and the parson maintained that the well had at one time been esteemed holy, and that the image of a saint had occupied this niche.

It is my opinion that the ancient British saints were as choice in their selection of springs of water, near which to settle, as are we, their degenerate descendants, in our selection of a vintage port, or a tap of good ale.

Rose was at the well, in the delicious cool of sundown, with the murmuring water rising and lapping the sides of the basin, then gurgling away under the sill of the door; she had on her pink cotton gown and white apron that covered her bosom and was pinned at the shoulders. She had turned up her sleeves above the elbows, displaying beautifully moulded white arms, and the pretty, dimpled, rosy elbows as well.

Then she looked around. She heard something beside the mutter of the spring; and a shade, moreover, fell over her at her work.



"I want to speak with you, Rose," said the lad.

She saw what caused the noise and cast the shadow. It was young Tom Trenneman who had come there; and having seen, she seemed inclined to listen. He had plucked a tall head of foxglove, and with it he was wafting the flies away.

"I want to speak with you, Rose," said the lad.

"Well, speak away, but I must mind the butter."

"You will listen to me?"

"Yes, as far as I can. What is it all about?"

"It is all about my father."

"Can't he take care of himself?"

"That I don't know. I've read in books that women are designin' creeters, and I ain't easy in my mind about him. There is Mrs. Veale, to our place, as crafty and schemin' as an old witch!"

"But she is not old—not so very."

"That's the worst of it. She is trying to trap my father; she's layin' a net for him, and he is that simple and confidin' that she'll snap the net on him afore he knows where he is. I've tried to hint it to him not to trust her, but, Lor! he thinks I'm alludin' to the chickings. He don't see, he is that innocent. But there is everyone else sees it fast enough. She has made up her mind to be Mrs. Trenneman, and there'll be no withstandin' her—not wi' him such an innocent as he is. He, poor old chap, took on so at my mother's death; he'll never forget her—never think on another, and therel a clever and wicked woman will just shut her hands on him"—he clapped his palms on a fly, but it eluded him—"I was goin' to say 'as I ketch this bluebottle,' but I wasn't smart enough. You see, I'm not a woman. She'll do it."

"What can I do to help you—or your father? I say, young Tom, do y' look at the butter now. It's comin' now—rare, ain't it?"

"What can you do?" repeated the lad. "Can't you speak to your mother, and get her to open father's eyes? It don't do for me—a son—to speak too plain. Old people get just like children—like new-born babes, and don't see the wickedness there is in the world, and think no more o' marryin' and giving in marriage than the angels in heaven."

"That's true," responded Rose. "That's like my mother. I don't fancy the thought of getting a second husband ever crossed her mind, she was that wrapped up in my father, and she's so happy in her widowed state. And what is more, she thinks so little of marriage that I reckon she hasn't even given a thought to me—that some time I may —"

"These old folks want their eyes opening, like puppies and kittens," said young Tom. "If you take little dogs as is only a few days old, they don't see; but chuck 'em into the water to drown 'em, and with the shock they open 'em fast enough."

"But what can we do?"

"Give 'em a shock, say I."

"But how?"

"That is what I've been considering. I will not stand it to have Mrs. Veale go wormin' herself into bein' my mother and managin' father and the farm. She'll do it, and do it inevitable, unless we countermine her."

"But how can we do that?"

"We must put someone in the farm with authority to kick her out."

"I do not see how that is to be managed."

"Can't we get your mother to take father? My stars! She'd blaze away at Mrs. Veale. I heard her jawin' old David Beach once, and she gave it him! Now, if she can do that to a man, how much more will she do it to one of her own sect. That's what they call at school a rule-o'-three sum."

"No, young Tom," said Rose, after she had rolled the butter into beautiful lumps of one pound. "No, it is no good. It would hurt mother's feelin's cruel to mention it. She has got like as an altar set up and a throne in her heart all to father, whom she loved so cruel fondly that I reckon she could not think of another man. It would be like stabbing her to the heart to mention such a thing to her. And I can't do it—I couldn't for the life of me. She'd never forgive me."

"Then you think it's no go?"

"None at all."

Young Tom heaved a sigh.

"Well, I did think we might have opened his eyes by making him marry

again, but as that won't do, then I've another plan as an eye-opener. Will you help me?"

"If I can."

"Oh, I can't do it without you. You and I must have our banns put in, and be married right off on end. Then you will come into father's farm, and we will kick Mrs. Veale out. I'll back you up in it."

"Lor! young Tom, what an idea!"

"For father's sake something must be done."

"Well, we can think about it."

"There's no time to be lost. If Mrs. Veale gets wind of it, she'll draw her nets at once. We must look peart over it."

"What would mother say?"

"I wouldn't ax her. I'd just take her by surprise. It'll do her a sight o' good. These dear old innocents want a little surprising to make them know the world."

"Well," said Rose, "I don't mind. It is all done in a good cause. But when do you think of it?"

"At once. I'll go off to the passon now, and have the banns put in. My stars! When to-morrow they hear you and me thrown out o' the pulpit [a local expression], won't they only sit up on end and cock their ears!"

"But they may forbid the banns, and that would shame me."

"They will not do that. They will be too surprised to speak. 'Twill do 'em oceans of good. A reg'lar pick-me-up."

* * * * *

Now before Mrs. Levermore descended from the trap of Farmer Trenneman, said she to him: "When do you propose to speak of the matter in hand to young Tom?"

"Not to night. Leave it to me. I'll come down on him like the lid of a corn-bin on a mouse some day next week. And you will speak of the other little matter to Rose?"

"Yes, not to-night. I'll just turn it about in my head and see the best way to do it. She's good-natured enough, but is stubborn sometimes. I'll speak during the week and settle all for you."

* * * * *

Both Farmer Trenneman, as churchwarden, and Mrs. Levermore, as widow of a late churchwarden, were regular attendants at church on the Sunday mornings.

Now, on the Sunday that followed the Saturday market from which Trenneman and Mrs. Levermore had returned part way together, both were in their places; so also were the young people.

Immediately after the Second Lesson, the organ was wont to strike up the prelude to the "Jubilate." When, however, banns were to be called, a slip of paper was sent down to the organist at the west end to desire a pause. When such a slip travelled down the church, the congregation awaited an announcement with breathless interest.

Such a slip had travelled west this morning, and after the Second Lesson there ensued the pause. Then the Rector stood up and said—

"I publish the Banns of Marriage between Thomas Trenneman the younger, bachelor, of this parish, and Rose Levermore, spinster, also of this parish. If any of you know any just cause or impediment why these persons should not be joined together in Holy Matrimony, ye are now to declare it. This is the First Time of Asking."

Then tum-te-tum-tum went the organ, and before either Thomas Trenneman, senior, or Mrs. Levermore had recovered from their surprise, the congregation, led by the choir, were singing "O be joyful."

When service was over, Mr. Trenneman started to walk home, but Mrs. Levermore had started earlier. Before he had got into the lane he saw her awaiting him. He slackened his pace, and hesitated whether to go on or go back. But, bracing himself, he pushed forward.

She hooked herself on to his arm. "Tom, they have been too quick for us."

"Yes; they've stolen a march on us."

"I think we two had best, as matters stand, make it up between us and follow—"

"Jove!" exclaimed the farmer, interrupting her; "I've left my prayer-book in church. Go on, don't wait for me. As to what you've said—I'll think of it, I'll think of it—don't mind me."

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HE was such a large, strong man that, when he first set foot in the little parallelogram I called my garden, it seemed to shrink to half its size and become preposterous. But I noticed at the same time that he was holding in the open palm of his huge hand the roots of a violet with such infinite tenderness and delicacy that I would have engaged him as my gardener on the spot. But this could not be, as he was already the proud proprietor of a market garden and nursery on the outskirts of the suburban Californian town where I lived. He would, however, come for two days in the week, stock and look after my garden, and impart to my urban intellect such horticultural hints as were necessary. His name was "Rütli," which I presumed to be German, but which my neighbours rendered as "Rootleigh," possibly from some vague connection with his occupation. His own knowledge of English was oral and phonetic. I have a delightful recollection of a bill of his in which I was charged for "fioletz," with the vague addition of "maine cains." Subsequent explanation proved it to be "many kinds."

Nevertheless, my little garden bourgeoned and blossomed under his large, protecting hand. I became accustomed to walk around his feet respectfully when they blocked the tiny paths, and to expect the total eclipse of that garden-bed on which he worked, by his huge bulk. For the tiniest and most reluctant rootlet seemed to respond to his caressing paternal touch; it was a pretty sight to see his huge fingers tying up some slender stalk to its stick with the smallest thread, and he had a reverent way of laying a bulb or seed in the ground, and then gently shaping and smoothing a small mound over it, which made the little inscription on the stick above more like an affecting epitaph than ever. Much of this gentleness may have been that apology for his great strength, common with large men; but his face was distinctly amiable, and his very light blue eyes were at times wistful and dog-like in their kindness. I was soon to learn, however, that placability was not entirely his nature.

The garden was part of a fifty *vara* lot of land, on which I was simultaneously erecting a house. But the garden was finished before the house was, through certain circumstances very characteristic of that epoch and civilisation. I had purchased the Spanish title, the only *legal* one, to the land, which, however, had been in *possession* of a "squatter." But, he had been unable to hold that possession against a "jumper"—another kind of squatter who had entered upon it covertly, fenced it in, and marked it out in building sites. Neither having legal rights, they could not invoke the law; the last man held possession. There was no doubt that in due course of litigation and time both these ingenuous gentlemen would have been dispossessed in favour of the real owner—myself—but that course would be a protracted one. Following the usual custom of the locality, I paid a certain sum to the jumper to yield up peaceably *his* possession of the land, and began to build upon it. It might be reasonably supposed that the question was settled. But it was not. The house was nearly finished when, one morning, I was called out of my editorial sanctum by a pallid painter, looking even more white-leaded than usual, who informed me that my house was in the possession of five armed men! The entry had been made peaceably during the painters' absence to dinner under a wayside tree. When they returned, they had found their pots and brushes in the road, and an intimation from the windows that their re-entrance would be forcibly resisted as a trespass.

I honestly believe that Rütli was more concerned than myself over this dispossession. While he loyally believed that I would get back my property, he

was dreadfully grieved over the inevitable damage that would be done to the garden during this interval of neglect and carelessness. I even think he would have made a truce with my enemies, if they would only have let him look after his beloved plants. As it was, he kept a passing but melancholy surveillance of them, and was indeed a better spy of the actions of the intruders than any I could have employed. One day, to my astonishment, he brought me a moss-rose bud from a bush which had been trained against a column of the verandah. It appeared that he had called—from over the fence—the attention of one of the men to the neglected condition of the plant, and had obtained permission to "come in and tie it up." The men, being merely hirelings of the chief squatter, had no personal feeling, and I was not therefore surprised to hear that they presently allowed Rütli to come in occasionally and look after his precious "slips." If they had any suspicions of his great strength, it was probably offset by his peaceful avocation and his bland, childlike face. Meantime, I had begun the usual useless legal proceeding, but had also engaged a few rascals of my own to be ready to take advantage of any want of vigilance on the part of my adversaries. I never thought of Rütli in that connection any more than they had.

A few Sundays later I was sitting in the little tea-arbour of Rütli's nursery, peacefully smoking with him. Presently he took his long china-bowled pipe from his mouth, and, looking at me blandly over his yellow moustache, said—

" You vants sometimes to go in dot house—eh ? "

I said, " Decidedly. "

" Mit a revolver, and keep dot house dose men out ? "

" Yes ! "

" Vell ! I put you in dot house to-day ! "

" Sunday ? "

" Shoost so ! It is a goot day ! On der ntay dree men vill out go to walk mit demselluffs, and visky trinken. Two"—holding up two gigantic fingers, apparently only a shade or two smaller than his destined victims—" stay dere. Dose I lift de fence over."

I hastened to inform him that any violence attempted against the parties *while in possession*—although that possession was illegal—would, by a fatuity of the law, land him in the county jail ! I said I would not hear of it !

" But suppose dere vos no violence ? Suppose dose men vos villin, eh ? How vos dot for high ? "

" I don't understand. "

" So ! You shall *not* understand ! Dot is better. Go away now and dell your men to coom dot house arount at halluff past dree. But *you* coom, mit yourself alone—shoost as if you vos *spazieren gehen*—for a walk—by dat fence at dree ! Ven you shall dot front door vide open see, go in, and dere you vos ! You vill 'der rest leef to me ! "

It was in vain that I begged Rütli to divulge his plan, and pointed out again the danger of his technically breaking the law. But he was firm—assuring me that I, myself, would be a witness that no assault would be made. I looked into his clear, good-humoured eyes, and assented. I had a burning desire to right my wrongs—but I think I also had considerable curiosity.

I passed a miserable quarter of an hour after I had warned my partisans, and then walked alone slowly down the broad leafy street towards the scene of contest. I have a very vivid recollection of my conflicting emotions. I did not believe that I would be killed ; I had no distinct intention of killing any

of my adversaries; but I had some considerable concern for my loyal friend Rütli, whom I foresaw might be in some peril from the revolver in my unpractised hand. If I could only avoid shooting *him*, I would be satisfied. I remember that the bells were ringing for church—a church of which my enemy, the chief squatter, was a deacon in good standing—and I felt guiltily conscious of my revolver in my hip-pocket, as two or three church-goers passed me with their hymn-books in their hands. I walked leisurely, so as not to attract attention, and to appear at the exact time—a not very easy task in my youthful excitement. At last I reached the front gate with a beating heart. There was no one on the high verandah—which occupied three sides of the low one-storied house—nor in the garden before it. But the front-door was open; I softly passed through the gate, darted up the verandah and into the house. A single glance around the hall and bare deserted rooms, still smelling of paint, showed me it was empty, and with my pistol in one hand and the other on the lock of the door, I stood inside, ready to bolt it against anyone but Rütli. But where was *he*?

The sound of laughter and a noise like skylarking came from the rear of the house and the back yard. Then I suddenly heard Rütli's heavy tread on the verandah, but it was slow, deliberate, and so exaggerated in its weight that the whole house seemed to shake with it. Then from the window I beheld an extraordinary sight! It was Rütli, swaying from side to side, but steadily carrying with outstretched arms two of the squatter party—his hands tightly grasping their collars. Yet I believe his touch was as gentle as with the violets. His face was preternaturally grave—theirs, to my intense astonishment, while they hung passive from his arms, wore that fatuous, imbecile smile seen on the faces of those who lend themselves to tricks of acrobats and strong men in the arena. He slowly traversed the whole length of one side of the house, walked down the steps to the gate, and then gravely deposited them *outside*. I heard him say, "Dot vins der pet, ain't it!" and immediately after the sharp click of the gate-latch.

Without understanding a thing that had happened, I rightly conceived this was the cue for my appearance with my revolver at the front door. As I opened it I still heard the sound of laughter, which, however, instantly stopped at a sentence from Rütli, which I could not hear. There was an oath, the momentary apparition of two furious and indignant faces over the fence; but these, however, seemed to be instantly extinguished and put down by the enormous palms of Rütli clapped upon their heads. There was a pause, and then Rütli turned around and quietly joined me in the doorway. But the gate was not again opened until the arrival of my partisans, when the house was clearly in my possession.

Safe inside with the door bolted I turned eagerly to Rütli for an explanation. It then appeared that during his occasional visits to the garden, he had often been an object of amusement and criticism to the men on account of his size, which seemed to them ridiculously inconsistent with his great good-humour, gentleness, and delicacy of touch. They had doubted his strength and challenged his powers. He had responded once or twice before—lifting weights or even carrying one of his critics at arm's length for a few steps. But he had reserved his final feat for this day and this purpose. It was for a bet, which they had eagerly accepted, secure in their belief in his simplicity, the sincerity of his motives in coming there, and glad of the opportunity of a little Sunday diversion. In their security they had not locked the door when they came out, and had not noticed that *he* had opened it. This was his simple story. His only comment: "I haf von der pet, but I dinks I shall nod collect der money." The two men did not return that afternoon, nor did their comrades. Whether they wisely conceived that a man who was so powerful in play might be terrible in earnest, whether they knew that his act, in which they had been willing performers, had been witnessed by passing citizens, who supposed it was skylarking, or whether their employer got tired of his expensive occupation, I never knew. The public believed the latter; Rütli, myself, and the two men he had evicted alone kept our secret.

From that time Rütli and I became firm friends, and long after I had no further need of his services in the recaptured house, I often found myself in the little tea-arbour of his prosperous nursery. He was frugal, sober, and industrious; small wonder that in that growing town he waxed rich, and presently opened a restaurant in the main street, connected with his market garden, which became famous. His relations to me never changed with his changed fortunes, he was always the simple market-gardener and florist who had aided my first house-keeping, and stood by me in an hour of need. Of all things regarding himself he was singularly reticent; I do not think he had any confidants or intimates—even among his own countrymen, whom I believed to be German. But one day he quite accidentally admitted he was a Swiss. As a youthful admirer of the race I was delighted, and told him so, with the enthusiastic addition that I could not quite understand his independence, with his devoted adherence to another's cause. He smiled sadly, and astonished me by saying that he had not heard from Switzerland since he left six years ago. He did not want to hear anything—he even avoided his countrymen lest he should. I was confounded.

"But," I said, "surely you have a longing to return to your country—all Swiss have! You will go back some day just to breathe the air of your native mountains."

"I shall go back some days," said Rütli, "after I have made mooch, mooch money—but not for dot air."

"What for, then?"

"For revenge—to get even."

Surprised, and for a moment dismayed as I was, I could not help laughing.

"Rütli and revenge!" Impossible! And to make it the more absurd, he was still smoking gently and regarding me with soft, complacent eyes. So unchanged was his face and manner that he might have told me he was going back to be married.

"You do not understand," he said forgivingly. "Some days I shall tell to you id. Id is a story. You shall make it yourselluff for dose babers dot you write. It is not pretty, berhaps, ain't it? but it is droo. And de endt is not yet."

Only that Rütli never joked, except in a ponderous fashion with many involved sentences, I should have thought he was taking a good-humoured rise out of me. But it was not funny. I am afraid I dismissed it from my mind as a revelation of something weak and puerile—quite inconsistent with his practical common-sense and strong simplicity, and wished he had not alluded to it. I never asked him to tell me the story. It was a year later, and only when he had invited me to come to the opening of a new hotel erected by him at a mountain Spa of great resort, that he himself alluded to it.

The hotel was a wonderful affair even for those days, and Rütli's outlay of capital convinced me that by this time he must have made the "mooch money" he coveted. Something of this was in my mind when we sat by the window of his handsomely furnished private office overlooking the pines of a Californian cañon. I asked him if the scenery was like Switzerland.

"Ach! no!" he replied; "but I vill puuld a hotel shoost like dis dare."

"Is that a part of your revenge?" I asked, with a laugh.

"Ah! so!—a bart."

I felt relieved; a revenge so practical did not seem very malicious or idiotic. After a pause he puffed contemplatively at his pipe, and then said, "I dell you somedings of dot story now."

He began. I should like to tell it in his own particular English, mixed with American slang, but it would not convey the simplicity of the narrator. He was the son of a large family who had lived for centuries in one of the highest villages in the Bernese Oberland. He attained his size and strength early, but with it a singular distaste to use it in the rough regular work on the farm, although he was a great climber and mountaineer, and, what was at first overlooked as mere boyish fancy, had an insatiable love and curious knowledge of plants and flowers. He knew the haunts of *Edelweiss*, Alpine rose, and blue gentian, and had brought home rare and unknown blossoms from under the icy lips of glaciers. But as he did this when his time was supposed to be occupied in looking after the cows in the higher pastures and making cheeses, there was trouble in that hard-working, practical family. A giant with the tastes and disposition of a schoolgirl was an anomaly in a Swiss village. Unfortunately again, he was not studious; his record in the village school had been on a par with his manual work, and the family had not even the consolation of believing that they were fostering a genius. In a community where practical industry was the highest virtue, it was not strange, perhaps, that he was called "lazy" and "shiftless"; no one knew the long climbs and tireless vigils he had undergone in remote solitudes in quest of his favourites—or knowing, forgave him for it. Abstemious, frugal, and patient as he was, even the crusts of his father's table were given him grudgingly. He often went hungry rather than ask the bread he had failed to earn. How his great frame was nurtured in those days he never knew; perhaps the giant mountains recognised some kin in him and fed and strengthened him after their own fashion. Even his gentleness was confounded with cowardice. "Dot vos de hardtest," he said simply; "it is not goot to be oplicit to half crush your brudder, ven he would make a laugh of you to your sweetheart." The end came sooner than he expected, and, oddly enough, through this sweetheart. "Gottlieb," she had said to him one day, "the English *Fremde* who stayed here last night met me when I was carrying some of those beautiful flowers you gave me. He asked me where they were to be found, and I told him only *you* knew. He wants to see you; go to him. It may be luck to you." Rütli went. The stranger, an English Alpine climber of scientific tastes, talked with him for an hour. At the end of that time, to everybody's astonishment, he engaged this hopeless idler as his personal guide for three months, at the sum of five francs a day! It was inconceivable, it was unheard of! The Englishman was as mad as Gottlieb, whose intellect had always been under suspicion! The schoolmaster pursed up his lips, the pastor shook his head; no good could come of it; the family looked upon it as another freak of Gottlieb's—but there was one big mouth less to feed and more room in the kitchen—and they let him go. They parted from him as ungraciously as they had endured his presence.

Then followed two months of sunshine in Rütli's life; association with his beloved plants, and the intelligent sympathy and direction of a cultivated man. Even in altitudes so dangerous that they had to take other and more experienced guides, Rütli was always at his master's side. That *savant's* collection of Alpine flora excelled all previous ones; he talked freely with Rütli of further work in the future, and relaxed his English reserve so far as to confide to him that the outcome of their collection and observation might be a book. He gave a flower a Latin name, in which even the ignorant and delighted Rütli could distinguish some likeness to his own. But the book was never compiled. In one of their later and more difficult ascents they and their two additional guides were overtaken by a sudden storm. Swept from their feet down an ice-bound slope, Rütli alone of the roped-together party kept a foothold on the treacherous incline. Here this young Titan, with bleeding fingers clenched in a rock cleft, sustained the struggles and held up the lives of his companions by that precious thread

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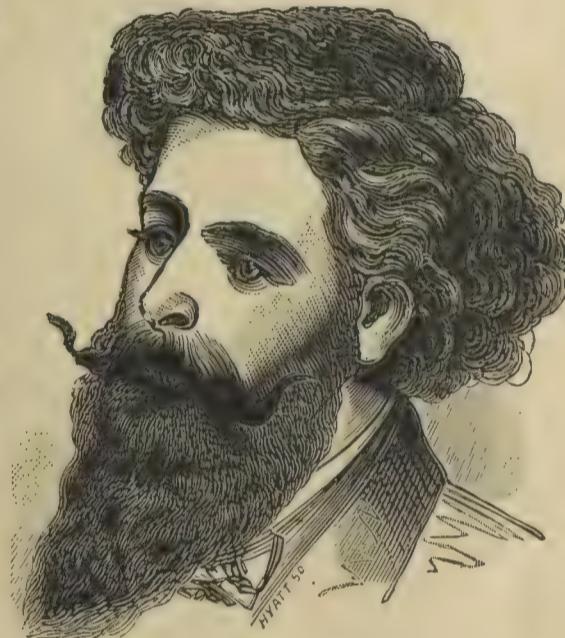
Prevents it Falling Off and Turning Grey.
Unequalled for Promoting the Growth of the Beard and Moustache.

THE WORLD-REOWNED REMEDY FOR BALDNESS

For Curing Weak and Thin Eyelashes,
Preserving, Strengthening, and Rendering the Hair Beautifully Soft.

For Removing Scurf, Dandruff, &c.; also for Restoring Grey Hair to its Original Colour,

IT IS WITHOUT A RIVAL.



EDWARDS' "HARLENE" PRESERVES, STRENGTHENS, AND INVIGORATES CHILDREN'S HAIR.

Read What the Public say.

GRADUALLY FALLING OFF.

Gentlemen.—For years past my hair has been gradually falling off, when I was recommended to try "Harlene." I procured a bottle, and am pleased to say that I noticed a marked change in my hair two weeks afterwards. I have used in all four bottles, and now, am grateful to say, possess a head of hair that I am proud of—I may say, justly.

Omega House, Winchester Road, Tottenham. TALBOT GREY.

THE HON. MRS. THOMPSON'S TESTIMONY.

The Hon. Mrs. THOMPSON desires to testify to the value of "Harlene" for strengthening and preserving the hair, and will be pleased to allow her testimony to be publicly used.

VAIN REGRETS.

Gentlemen,—I have tried your "Harlene," and find there is none to equal it. I only regret that I did not try it years ago. Miss PRESTON.
Southend Villas, Syston, near Leicester.

STOPPED THE HAIR FALLING.

Miss COONEY, Basin View, Fair Hill, Galway, Ireland, is much pleased with the "Harlene," and has recommended it to her friends. It has quite stopped the falling of her hair. Please be prompt in sending present order.

A WONDERFUL DISCOVERY.

Dear Sir,—Yours is indeed a wonderful discovery. I have used one bottle, and can detect an improvement in my hair already. Please send another bottle.

46, Handsworth Street, Glasgow.

A DOCTOR'S OPINION.

Dr. BISHOP has used two bottles of Edwards' "Harlene," and feels that it has had a good effect, and is encouraged to use more. Please send two bottles for money enclosed.

Berkeley Lodge, Gipsy Hill, Upper Norwood, S.E.

LOSING HAIR AFTER INFLUENZA.

Gentlemen,—I think it only right to add my testimony to the wonderful effects of "Harlene." Four years ago I began to lose my hair, and tried many of the advertised remedies with no beneficial result. This year, after two serious attacks of influenza, it not only fell out, but began to grow rapidly grey, lank, and dull. I was then taken with an illness which confined me to my bed for many weeks. My hair fell out even more than before, leaving bald places. The trained nurse who attended me told me that her last patient had been somewhat in the same condition, but she had recommended "Harlene," and her hair was quite restored. Being forty years of age, I scarcely thought there was much hope for me, so I only purchased a shilling bottle; even this at once decreased the falling out. Naturally, I continued to use it nightly, and have now used two large bottles, with the following results: The hair has ceased to fall out, and my head is covered with a new growth, which is brown, and not grey. You may make any use you like of this testimonial, which is quite unsolicited, and though I do not wish my name published, you may refer anyone to me privately.

QUIET BALD.

Dear Sir,—I have great pleasure in stating that your "Harlene" is the best I have ever used. I have tried several other so-called restorers, but to no purpose. I was quite bald on the top of my head, but thanks to your wonderful "Harlene," I have a good head of hair now after six weeks' use. You may include this with your other testimonials.—Yours respectfully,

12, Grove Street, Retford.

ARTHUR BLANCHARD.

PROVED IT HERSELF.

Dear Sir,—I am delighted to add my testimony to the wonderful efficacy of your hair tonic. I never could have credited the effects of "Harlene," had I not myself proved them.—I am, yours truly,
59, Elgin Crescent, Notting Hill. KATHERINE RAMSEY.

P.S.—You may publish this, and I will always recommend it if applied to.

A MARKED IMPROVEMENT.

Dear Sirs,—Having used one bottle of your "Harlene" I noticed a marked improvement; my hair is beginning to grow, and the scurf has disappeared. I will recommend it to my friends.

MISS WEBB.

Northumberland House, Brandon, Suffolk.

VERY GOOD.

Dear Sir,—MR. HOLCOMBE has recommended me to use the "Harlene." I had some from him for a trial, and I think it is very good. I have recommended it to my friends. Enclosed Postal Orders for 14s. 6d. Please forward to Mrs. RENDALL as below.

44, Third Avenue, Queen's Park.

DESPAIRED OF SUCCESS.

Sirs,—My delight at the remarkable results produced by the use of your "Harlene" impels me to testify to its efficacy. I had tried several other applications and had despaired of success, when I was advised to try yours. I have used three bottles, and as a result my hair is as plentiful as it was ten years ago.

4, Rue de la Bourdierie, Paris.

Press Opinions.

"EDWARDS' 'HARLENE' is a cooling, refreshing, and fragrant preparation which, applied regularly to the hair, will soothe and restore it to its wonted thickness, as well as bring back its lost lustre. Many of the so-called hair restorers are distinguished by an unpleasant greasiness much disliked, while in other cases the preparations contain ingredients which, though beneficial for the time being, do much ultimately to permanently destroy the hair, and very often cause injury to the brain. The 'HARLENE' is the result of much careful study by experts. It is absolutely guaranteed to hold no injurious matter; and in using it we may be certain we shall only derive the utmost benefit."—*Lady's Realm.*

"AT THE FALL OF THE LEAF." We poor mortals are indeed influenced—more than we will sometimes admit—by the change of the seasons; and it is a noticeable fact that in the Spring, and more especially at Autumntide, the hair is apt to lose its strength and fall out in large quantities. Such a loss should, of course, be immediately remedied by the application of some thoroughly good and reliable hair lotion. There is, perhaps, no better wash on the market than EDWARDS' 'HARLENE'—a capital restorer, which is bound to be appreciated by all those whose hair-roots are weak, or who are suffering from baldness. For an excellent growth of whiskers and moustaches, a little of the lotion should be

rubbed into the skin every day with a small sponge. Shaving will, of course, further the cause of the wash, which for loss and discoloration of the hair of the head must be used weekly in the measure of a tablespoonful to a quart of warm water. This shampoo would be greatly improved by a lather of Edwards' Linine soap. Considerable benefit can also be derived from the use of 'HARLENE' if the eyebrows and eyelashes are in a poor condition."—*St. Paul's.*

"'HARLENE' is excellent for all purposes. It is deliciously fragrant, and when applied to the roots of the hair has a deliciously soothing and cleansing effect on the scalp. Not only does it prevent the dandruff from the actual skin, but it keeps the hair in excellent condition, avoiding the necessity of frequent washing, a proceeding detrimental in itself, as it arrests the flow of natural oil and renders the hair brittle and dry-looking. 'HARLENE' undoubtedly is a certain preventive of premature baldness, and is the worst foe to grey hairs yet discovered. Its constant use will act as a preventive, and those who are already complaining of the evils referred to cannot do better than fly to it for relief. For promoting growth and restoring hair to its natural colour it is unrivalled; and whether the trouble is connected with the ambrosial tresses of the fair, or the hirsute appendages of the sterner sex, it may be relied on to encourage luxuriance and produce that silky, well-kept appearance which is the entire secret of a successful coiffure."—*Madame.*

1s., 2s. 6d., and (triple 2s. 6d. size) 4s. 6d. per Bottle, from Chemists, Hairdressers, and Stores all over the World, or sent direct on receipt of Postal Order.

EDWARDS' 'HARLENE' CO., 95 & 96, HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.



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FOR STEEL, IRON, BRASS AND COPPER VESSELS, FIRE-IRONS, MANTELS, &c.

REMOVES RUST, DIRT, STAINS, TARNISH, &c.

for more than an hour. Perhaps he might have saved them, but in their desperate efforts to regain their footing, the rope slipped upon a jagged edge of outcrop and parted as if cut by a knife. The two guides passed without an outcry into obscurity and death; Rütli, with a last despairing exertion, dragged to his own level his unconscious master—crippled by a broken leg.

Your true hero is apt to tell his tale simply: Rütli did not dwell upon these details, nor need I. Left alone upon a treacherous ice slope in benumbing cold, with a helpless man, eight hours afterwards he staggered, half blind,

Six months from the day he had left his home he was discharged cured. He had not a *kreutzer* in his pocket—he had never drawn his wages from his employer; he had preferred to have it in a lump sum that he might astonish his family on his return. His eyes were still weak, his memory feeble—only his great physical strength remained through his long illness. A few sympathising travellers furnished him the means to reach his native village—many miles away. He found his family had heard of the loss of the Englishman and the guides, and had believed he was one of them. Already he was forgotten.



It was Rütli, swaying from side to side, but steadily carrying with outstretched arms two of the squalter party.

incoherent, and inarticulate, into a "shelter" hut, with the dead body of his master in his stiffened arms. The shelter-keepers turned their attention to Rütli, who needed it most. Blind and delirious, with scarce a chance for life, he was sent the next day to a hospital, where he lay for three months, helpless, imbecile, and unknown. The dead body of the Englishman was identified, and sent home, the bodies of the guides were recovered by their friends; but no one knew aught of Rütli—even his name. While the event was still fresh in the minds of those who saw him enter the hut with the body of his master, a paragraph appeared in a Berne journal recording the heroism of this nameless man. But it could not be corroborated nor explained by the demented hero, and was presently forgotten.

"Ven you vos once believed to be det," said Rütli, after a philosophic pause and puff, "it vos not goot to ondeceif beoples. You oopsets somedings, soom-dimes always. Der hole dot you hef made in de grount, among your freints, and your family, vos covered up alretty. You are loocky if you vill not fint some vellars shtanding upon id! My frent, ven you vos *dink* det—*shtay* det—*be* det, and you vill lif happy!"

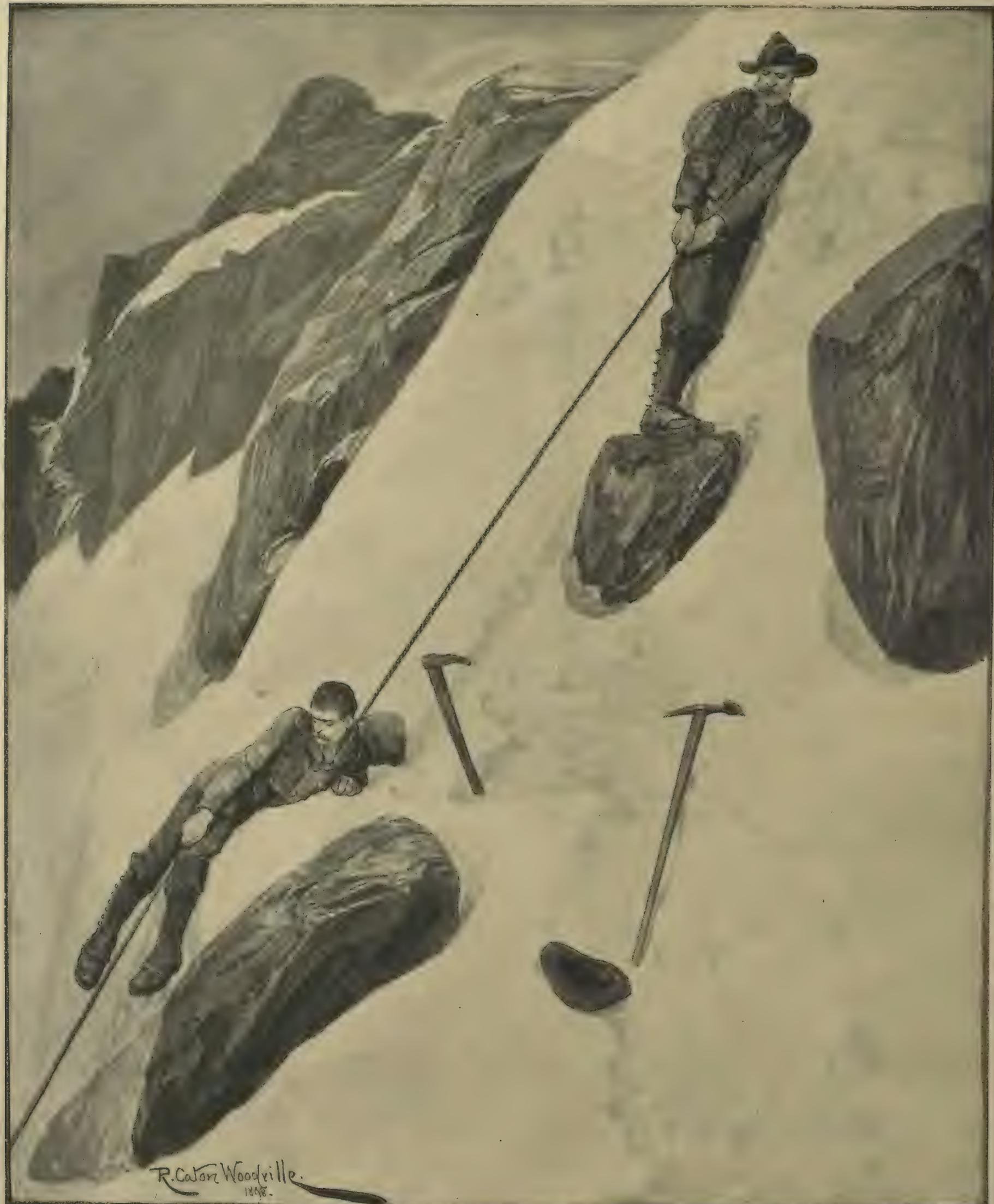
"But your sweetheart?" I said eagerly.

A slight gleam of satire stole into Rütli's light eyes. "My sweetheart, ven I vos dinks det is der miller engaged do bromply! It is mooth better dan to a man dot vos boor and plint and grazy! So! Vell, der next day I pids dem goot-pye,

und from der door I say, 'I am det now; but ven I next cooms pack alife, I shall dis village py! der lants, der houses all togedders. And den for yurselluff's lookoudt!'"

"Then that's your revenge? That is what you really intend to do?" I said; half laughing, yet with an uneasy recollection of his illness and enfeebled mind.

fader's house, der vos der church, der schoolhouse, dot vos de burgomaster's house," he went on, pointing to the respective plots in this odd curving parallelogram of the mountain shelf. "So was the fillage, when I leave him on the 5th of March eighteen hundred and seenty. Now you shall see him shoost



Rütti, with a last despairing exertion, dragged to his own level his unconscious master.

"Yes. Look here! I show you some dings." He opened a drawer of his desk and took out what appeared to be some diagrams, plans, and a small water-coloured map, like a surveyor's tracing. "Look," he said, laying his finger on the latter, "dat is a map from my fillage. I hef myselluff made it out from mine memory. Dot," pointing to a blank space, "is der mountain-side high up so far. It is no goot until I vill a tuncl make or der grade lefel. Dere-vos mine

as I vill make him ven I go back." He took up another plan—beautifully drawn and coloured, and evidently done by a professional hand. It was a practical, yet almost fairy-like transformation of the same spot! The narrow mountain shelf was widened by excavation, and a boulevard stretched on either side. A great hotel, not unlike the one in which we sat, stood in an open terrace with gardens and fountains—the site of his father's house. Blocks



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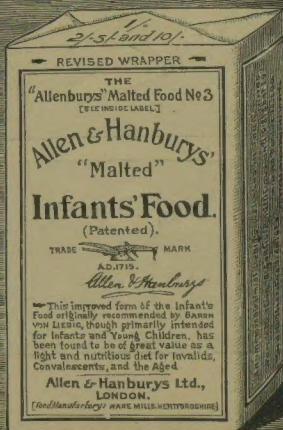


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of pretty dwellings, shops, and cafés filled the intermediate space. I laid down the paper.

"How long have you had this idea?"

"Efer since I left dere, fifteen years ago."

"But your father and mother may be dead by this time?"

"So—but dere vill be odders. Und der blace—it vill remain."

"But all this will cost a fortune—and you are not sure—"

"I know shoost vot id vill gost—to a cend."

"And you think you can ever afford to carry out your idea?"

"I vill affort id. Ven you shall make yet some moneys and go to Europe, you shall see. I vill infite you dere first. Now coom and look der house around."

* * * * *

I did not make "some moneys," but I did go to Europe. Three years after this last interview with Rütti I was coming from Interlaken to Berne by rail. I had not heard from him, and I had forgotten the name of his village, but as I looked up from the paper I was reading, I suddenly recognised him in the further end of the same compartment I occupied. His recognition of me was evidently as sudden and unexpected. After our first hand-grasp and greeting, I said—

"And how about our new village?"

"Dere is no fillage."

"What! You have given up the idea?"

"Yes. There is no fillage, olt or new."

"I don't understand."

He looked at me a moment. "You have not heard?"

"No."

He gently picked up a little local guide-book that lay in my lap, and turning its leaves, pointed to a page and read as follows—

"5 m. beyond the train passes a curve r., where a fine view of the lake may be seen. A little to the r. rises the steep slopes of the —, the scene of a terrible disaster. At three o'clock on March 5, 1850, the little village of —, lying midway of the slope, with its population of 950 souls, was completely destroyed by a landslip from the top of the mountain. So sudden was the catastrophe that not a single escape is recorded. A large portion of the mountain crest, as will be observed when it is seen in profile, descended to the valley, burying the unfortunate village to a depth variously estimated at from

1000 ft. to 1800 ft. The geological causes which produced this extraordinary displacement have been fully discussed, but the greater evidence points to the theory of subterranean glaciers. 5 m. beyond — the train crosses the r. bridge."

I laid down the guide-book in breathless astonishment.

"And you never heard of this in all these years?"

"Nefer! I asked no questions, I read no pooks. I have no ledgers from home."

"And yet you—" I stopped, I could not call him a fool; neither could I, in the face of his perfect composure and undisturbed eyes, exhibit a concern greater than his own! An uneasy recollection of what he confessed had been his mental condition immediately after his accident came over me. Had he been the victim of a strange hallucination regarding his house and family all these years? Were these dreams of revenge, this fancy of creating a new village, only an outcome of some shock arising out of the disaster itself—which he had long since forgotten?

He was looking from the window. "Coom," he said, "ve are near der blace. I vill show id to you." He rose and passed out to the rear platform. We were in the rear car, and a new panorama of the lake and mountains flashed upon us at every curve of the line. I followed him. Presently he pointed to what appeared to be a sheer wall of rock and stunted vegetation towering two or three thousand feet above us, which started out of a gorge we were passing. "Dere it vos!" he said. I saw the vast stretch of rock face rising upward and onward—but nothing else. No débris—no ruins—nor even a swelling or rounding of the mountain flank over that awful tomb. Yet, stay! as we dashed across the gorge and the face of the mountain shifted, high up, the sky-line was slightly broken as if a few inches—a mere handful—of the crest was crumbled away. And then—both gorge and mountain vanished.

I was still embarrassed and uneasy, and knew not what to say to this man at my side, whose hopes and ambition had been as quickly overthrown and buried, and whose life-dream had as quickly vanished. But he himself, taking his pipe from his lips, broke the silence.

"It vos a narrow esgabe!"

"What was?"

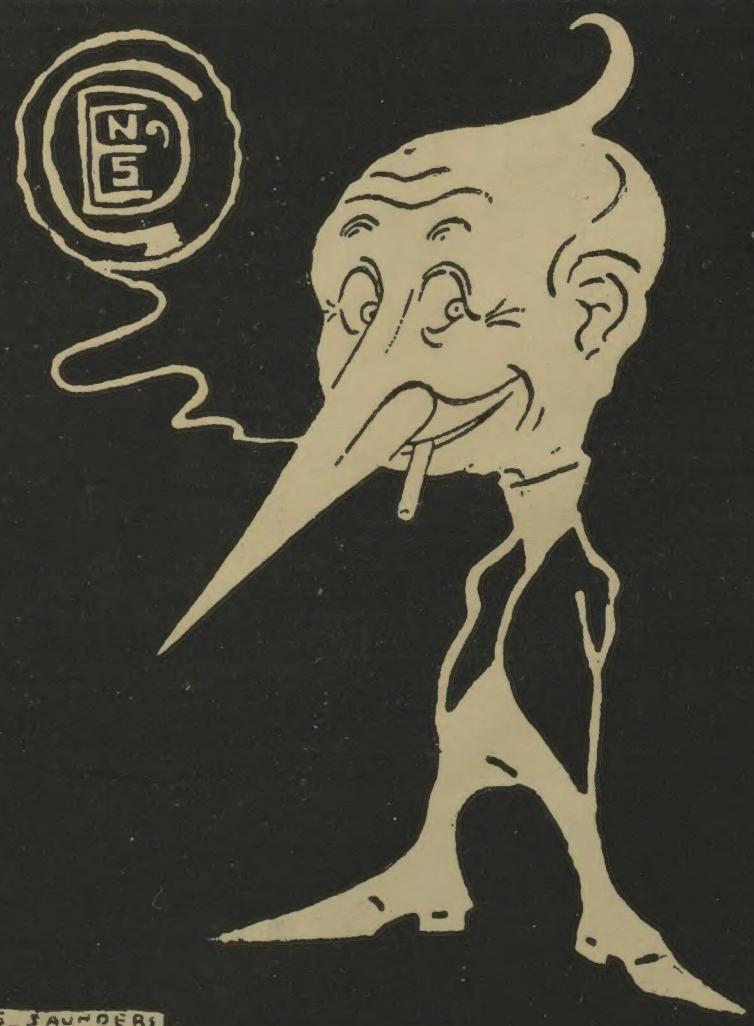
"Vy-dis dings. If I had stayed in my fader's house, I would haf been det, for goot, and perried too! Sometimes dose dings cooms ould apart right, don't id?"

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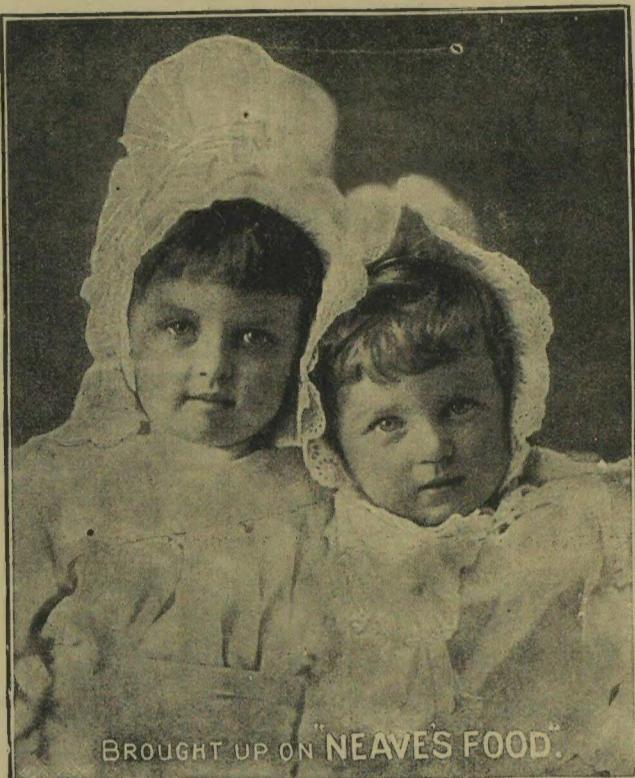
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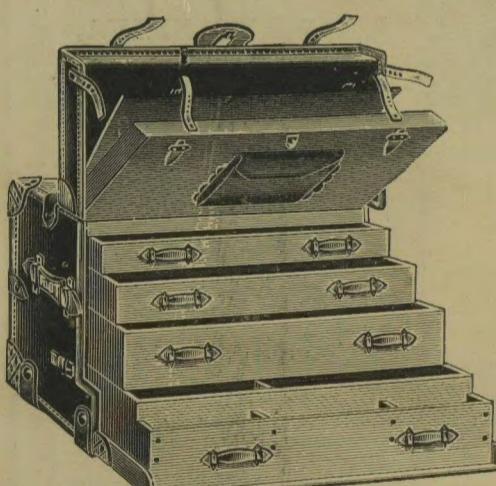
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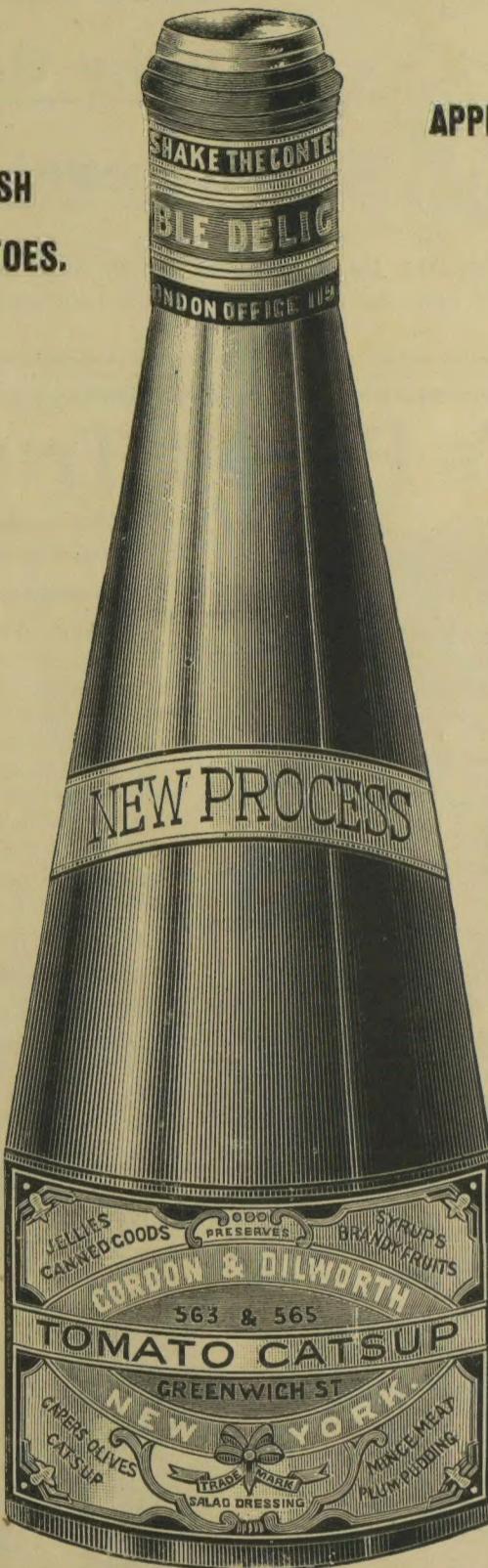
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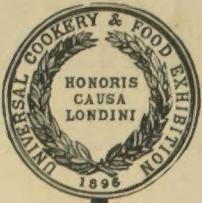
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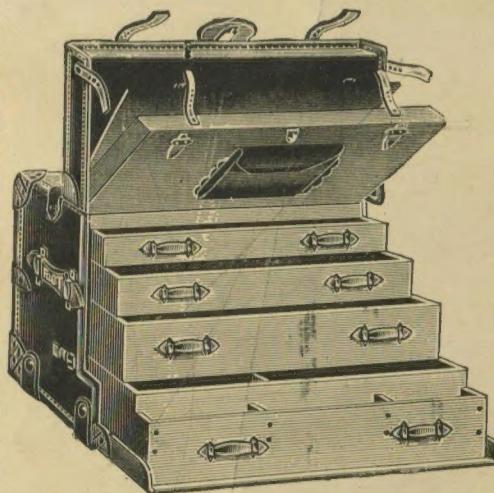
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